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INDIA.

REPORTS

ON THE

SCHEME FOR INDIAN EMIGRATION TO BRITISH GUIANA.

PART I—Report by

Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, M.L.C.,

AND

V. N. Tivary, M.A. (Servants of India Society).

PART II—Report by

G. F. Keatinge, C.I.E., I.C.S. (retired)

WITH APPENDICES.



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE.

 (EMIGRATION.)

Simla, the 24th October 1921.

PRESS COMMUNIQUE.

Towards the end of 1919 a deputation from British Guiana came to India to lay before the Government of India a scheme for the colonization of British Guiana by means of assisted emigration from India. This scheme was examined by a Committee appointed by the Legislative Council under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee. The Committee were of opinion that no scheme of emigration of Indians should be approved unless it was certain that the position of the immigrants in their new homes would in all respects be equal to that of any other class of His Majesty's subjects resident in the Colony. In order to satisfy this condition, the deputation from British Guiana laid before the Committee a draft Ordinance assuring to Indians equal rights with other classes of British subjects in British Guiana. On receipt of this, the Committee passed the following Resolution:—

“The Committee having heard Dr. Nunan and Mr. Luckhoo is inclined to take a favourable view of the scheme of colonization presented by them in view of guarantees and safeguards which they are prepared to provide by legislation and otherwise, but before recommending definite acceptance of it would advise the appointment of a deputation of three competent persons to proceed to British Guiana, investigate the conditions on the spot and report to the Government of India.”

The draft Ordinance prepared by the deputation was forwarded by the Government of India to the Secretary of State with the request that they might be informed whether the Government of British Guiana was prepared to undertake legislation on the lines suggested in it. It was added that if the promised guarantees were given, the Government of India would send a small deputation to British Guiana to investigate local conditions, to test on the spot the suitability of the colonization scheme, and to report whether any further guarantees were necessary before emigration was reopened. The Secretary of State reports that the Colonial Government is willing to undertake legislation assuring to Indian emigrants to the colony equal political rights with other classes of British subjects in British Guiana, and the necessary steps are being taken.

3. The Government of India have accordingly decided to despatch the promised deputation which will be composed of the following members :—

Mr. G. F. KEATINGE, C.I.E., I.C.S., Director of Agriculture, Bombay,
at present on leave in England.

M. R. RY. DIWAN BAHADUR PARTU KESAVA PILLAI, Deputy President,
Madras Legislative Council.

Mr. V. N. TIARY, M.A., Servants of India Society, Allahabad.

It is expected that the deputation will reach British Guiana early next year.

4. The terms of reference to the deputation are to investigate local conditions in British Guiana to examine on the spot the suitability of the colonization scheme prepared by the representatives of British Guiana and to report whether any further guarantees in respect of the status of Indian immigrants are necessary before emigration is reopened.

R. EWBANK,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

PART I

R E P O R T

BY

**Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, M.L.C., and
V. N. Tewary, M.A.**

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTORY.

The terms of reference to the Deputation were as follows :—

1. to investigate local conditions in British Guiana ;
2. to examine on the spot the suitability of the colonization scheme prepared by the representatives of British Guiana ; and
3. to report whether any further guarantees in respect of the status of Indian immigrants are necessary before emigration is reopened.

2. We reached British Guiana on the 12th February, 1922, and stayed there till the 7th April. During our stay, we jointly and severally visited a number of sugar plantations and rice-farms, where we examined the conditions under which the immigrants have to live and labour, and heard their grievances in the presence of their managers. Besides a large number of petitions written in their vernaculars were presented to us by the labourers from all over the Colony. A summary of their difficulties and sufferings will be found in Appendix* XXI. There were several informal meetings, at which various questions relating to our investigation were discussed with the representatives of the East Indian† Association, the East Indian National Congress, the Sugar Planters Association and the British Guiana Labour Union. We recorded the evidence of many witnesses representing various interests as well as groups of labourers. Further, all classes of East Indians belonging to different parts of the colony used to visit us daily, thus enabling us to get an insight into the different aspects of the Indian question. We had also several conferences with the officials of the Immigration Department, whose invariable courtesy and hearty co-operation we gratefully acknowledge. We are also indebted to several Christian Missions in the colony for their active sympathy with the objects of our enquiry ; particularly, to the Reverend Dr. Cropper of the Canadian Mission, and to Major Alexander of the Salvation Army, both of whom freely gave us the benefit of their intimate knowledge of Indian affairs in the colony,—knowledge acquired in the course of their devoted service among immigrants extending over 25 years.

3. We left British Guiana on the 7th and arrived at the Port of Spain, Trinidad, on the 9th April, where we remained till the 17th April, 1922. We visited various places, and met a large number of East Indians. We also requested the Protector of Immigrants to give us information on several points

*Page 154 *infra*.

†Immigrants from India and their descendants are known in British Guiana and the West Indies as East Indians.

relating to the East Indians domiciled there, on the lines of the information collected through the Agent-General of Immigration in British Guiana. He was good enough to promise that he would do so.

4. The Deputation broke up at Trinidad on the 17th April, and re-assembled in London on the 15th May. We held several meetings for the preliminary discussion of various questions arising out of our investigations. But we had regretfully to put off the drafting of the report in view of the fact that neither the corrected transcript of the minutes of evidence recorded in British Guiana nor all the statistical information asked for in British Guiana and Trinidad, had arrived or was expected to arrive within less than six weeks. We were also influenced in arriving at this decision by the fact that the problem of emigration to British Guiana had ceased to be urgent, as, in the opinion of His Excellency the Governor, the colony would not, owing to the present economic crisis in the sugar industry, require immigrants from India till the end of 1924. In these circumstances, nothing, it was felt, was to be lost, and much to be gained, by waiting for the arrival of the above information, before the drafting of the report was taken in hand.

5. As regards the official reports and statistical data from Trinidad, which the Protector of Immigrants had promised to send at the earliest opportunity, we regret to say that they have not even now been received. From British Guiana, however, the last batch of papers from the Immigration Agent General reached us in the last week of July, and the typed summary of the evidence on the 16th August, 1922.

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6-10.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
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11. We should place on record our deep sense of gratitude to His Excellency Sir Wilfred Collet, Governor of British Guiana, for his kindly courtesy and unaffected hospitality, and of our indebtedness to His Excellency and his officers for all the help and information given to us in the course of our investigation. We are also indebted to non-official gentlemen of all classes for their valuable help and co-operation.

12. Our stay in Trinidad was short, and our enquiry there was of an informal character. We are very thankful to His Excellency Sir Samuel Herbert Wilson and his officers for their kind hospitality. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to place on record our sense of great obligation to the Hon'ble the Reverend C. D. Lalla and other prominent Indians of Trinidad for their warm welcome to us, and for the great trouble they took in acquainting us with the condition of Indian immigrants in the island.

SECTION II.—PHYSICAL FEATURES.

13. British Guiana, the "El Dorado" of Sir Walter Raleigh, is the only British possession in the vast continent of South America. It is bounded on

* These paragraphs discuss the action of Mr. Keatinge in submitting a separate report. The Government of India have decided to omit them on the ground that they could not properly be published without first giving Mr. Keatinge an opportunity of replying to the criticisms which they contain and as they are not pertinent to the main question under discussion.

the north-west by the Atlantic Ocean, while on the other three sides its frontiers march along the boundary lines of Venezuela, Brazil and Dutch Guiana.

11. *Area and extent.*—It is said to comprise an area of 90,000 square miles and has a sea-board extending over 250 miles. Its length from north to south has been estimated at about 550 miles, and its average breadth from east to west at 300 miles. It is bigger than Bengal or the Presidency of Bombay minus Sindh. If a territory as big as the Province of Agra, or Bihar, and Orissa, were to be carved out of British Guiana, there would still remain an area of 7,000 square miles. But in this big country, only the coast-land is as yet inhabited, the rest being primeval forest. This coastal strip stretches along the whole length of the sea-board; and in depth, varies from 10 miles on the west to 40 miles along the Berbice and Courantyne rivers. A peculiar feature of this flat and comparatively narrow plain is that it is to a large extent slightly below the level of ordinary spring tides which flood the low-lying parts. Its margin is protected from sea and river by a dense growth of mangrove and coumda, behind which lie grassy savannahs which are mostly under water during the rains. The coastal land is, as one writer has said, "often below the level of the sea, in most parts liable to its inroads, and requiring dams and sluices (now replaced by a sea-wall) to guard against the dangers of inundation. The soil, however, is rich, and its fertility grows year by year on account of the deposits of many great rivers." (*Vide Handbook of British Guiana*, page 13.) This alluvial land resembles the soil of Bengal alike in its fertility and the natural causes responsible for it.

12. While the coast strip is flat, there are high and undulating lands in the interior. The southern and western districts are more hilly than the northern and eastern; and the coast-line is broken by the mouths of great rivers. "Though the mountains are mainly in the south and east, yet on the same sides, towards Brazil and Venezuela, are to be found vast savannahs or plains covered with grass, almost unbroken by tree or hill. A somewhat similar plain lies further north between the Cayuni and Pomeroon districts; the latter, however, is largely covered with timber, and indeed the interior of the colony generally is so clothed with virgin forests, even up to the tops of the mountains, that it has hitherto proved more or less inaccessible except to the aborigines." (*Vide A historical Geography of the British Colonies*, by C. B. Lucas, Volume II, pages 288-9.) British Guiana has four mighty rivers and a large network of creeks—one of the rivers, the Essequibo, being as broad as 11 miles at its mouth.

13. *Natural Resources.*—The country is said to possess great mineral wealth. Gold, diamond and bauxite are at present the chief mining industries. But so long as communication with the interior is not rendered possible, it is difficult to be quite sure about the potential mineral wealth of the colony; but no uncertainty exists in regard to the commercial value of its vast and magnificent forests. It has got over 300 varieties of timber, some of which are of great durability and even heavier than water. There is also great scope for cattle-farming in this colony on account of its long stretches of savannahs and a perennial supply of water from its net-work of streams and rivers.

14. *Climate and Rainfall.*—British Guiana lies roughly between 1° to 8° North of the equator, and between 75° to 61° West of Greenwich. The

climate is equable and temperate, resembling that of Malabar. The temperature seldom touches 90° F., and rarely falls below 75° F.: and the average rainfall varies from 84·19 inches at Matobe to 154·86 inches at Look Out. It has two wet and two dry seasons. From the middle of April up to the middle of August it is wet, and then follows the dry season which lasts till about the middle of November, when the second wet season of the year begins, lasting up to the middle of January.

SECTION III.—AGRICULTURE AND TRADE.

18. *Land*.—The total area of the colony, as pointed out above, is over 90,000 square miles (or 57 million acres), of which the area under cultivation is less than 200,000 acres; but apart from land actually cultivated, there are considerable areas held on various tenures for grazing, wood-cutting, mining or speculative purposes. The total area of land over which private rights of any kind exist does not appear to have been calculated, and is constantly changing; but the general statement that only one per cent. of the total area of the colony is at present developed, may be taken as representing approximately that portion of the total area, in regard to which private rights of a permanent nature exist. The rest of the land is still reserved by the Government.

19. *Tenures*.—The unoccupied land, comprising 99 per cent. of the whole area, is known as Crown Land, with the exception of quite small areas which have come into the hands of the Government of the colony by purchase, by acquisition, or by levy in satisfaction of a debt. These latter are known as Colony lands. Until 1914, extensive grants of lands were made to individuals and companies, conveying proprietary rights in the soil similar to free-hold rights. The bulk of the occupied lands on the coastal strip is now held on such tenure. It includes an area of 167,000 acres held by sugar companies; many village lands along the coast, inhabited by East Indians and Africans, and some rice lands along the coast and up the creeks held mainly by East Indians. The land held on these terms is frequently the subject of many sales and leases, and freely changes hands. The policy now in force is not to make such grants of land, but to give it on lease. An exception has, however, been made as regards grants of land not exceeding 10 acres made to small cultivators.

20. The regulations under which proprietary rights in Crown lands may be acquired are known as the *Crown Lands Regulations of 1919*. The most important provisions of these regulations may be briefly summarised as follows:—

- (1) Application must be made in writing to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines for a Grant, Lease, Licence or Permission relating to Crown lands. The following fees have to be paid:—

(a) Filing fees	..	..	..	..	..	\$5 00
(b) Survey fee for land up to 10 acres	..	..	..	..	..	\$7·50

(For larger areas the survey fee is fixed on a sliding scale.)

- (2) *Grants to small holders*.—The area disposed of to one person at one time shall not ordinarily exceed 10 acres.

- (3) The price of land is now \$2.40 per acre, one-fifth of the purchase money being payable at once, and the residue in four annual instalments.
- (4) The grant is made subject to the condition of cultivation or beneficial occupation of 1-5th of the grant within two years, and half of the grant within five years.
- (5) At the end of five years, the grant is made absolute, provided that the purchase money has been paid and the conditions of beneficial occupation have been complied with.
- (6) For five years from the date of the grant the grantee has preferential claim to purchase the second depth of the grant.
- (7) Grants may be transferred, leased, or mortgaged as soon as they become absolute.
- (8) *Leases to small holders.*—The area of the land leased to any one person at one time shall not ordinarily exceed 10 acres.
- (9) The length of the lease may extend at the option of the lessee to 99 years; and the lessee is entitled to one renewal for a similar period subject to a revision of the rental, which shall be based on the value of the land, apart from any improvements effected by the lessee.
- (10) The present rate of rent is 20 cents per acre per annum.
- (11) The land taken on lease must be cultivated or beneficially occupied as follows :—
 - (a) One-fifth of the area within two years and
 - (b) One-fourth of the area within three years.
- (12) Cultivation must be maintained in good order and in husbandman-like manner throughout the tenure, to the reasonable satisfaction of the Commissioner.

Leases may be transferred or mortgaged; but as regards a lease of land not exceeding 10 acres, mortgage can be effected only with the sanction of the Commissioner; and if the holder so desires, the mortgage may be effected in the presence of the Commissioner, a Magistrate, Commissary or Police Inspector. In the case of both grants and leases to small holders, made under these regulations, the rights to minerals, metals, precious stones, coal, and oil are reserved to Government.

21. *Grazing leases.*—Grazing leases are granted for a period up to 99 years, up to the limit of 5,000 acres, at an annual rent of 10 cents per acre, subject to the condition that at least two head of cattle for every five acres are kept and that the land is fenced within five years.

If land given out on grazing lease is required for cultivation or for other purposes, Government may resume it, after paying for actual improvements. It may be mentioned that the alienation of land is subject to special terms in the Crown Land Regulations; and to the discretion of the Governor.

22. *Other concessions.*—Special terms are offered for large scale cultivation, timber-cutting, mining, etc.

23. *Agriculture.*—The following table shows the progress of agricultural development during recent years :—

Year.					Total area cultivated.	Sugar-cane.	Rice.	Other products.
1903	..	..	..	..	118,000	78,000	17,000	2,000
1908	..	..	..	..	147,000	74,000	30,000	33,000
1913	..	..	..	..	152,000	72,000	35,000	43,000
1918	..	..	..	..	197,000	73,000	60,000	63,000
1919	..	..	..	..	191,000	71,000	61,000	62,000

The above round figures indicate a slight but steady decrease in the area under sugar-cane, and a marked increase in the area under rice and other crops. The total area cultivated shows a steady increase amounting to 61 per cent. in 16 years. Apart from rice cultivation, the crops showing the best progress are cocoanut which advanced from 4,000 to 27,000 acres, and coffee which advanced from 1,000 to 5,000 acres, during the period. The area under cocoa and ground provisions* has remained stationary. Of the total acreage under cultivation in 1919, 71,000 and 61,000 acres were under sugar and rice, respectively. Cocoanut accounted for 27,000 acres, while 18,000 acres were used for other crops, such as yams, cassava, etc. The areas under limes, cocoa and para-rubber were 1,000, 2,000 and 4,000 acres, respectively.

Of the above total area under cultivation, 89,000 acres comprise the total average of the sugar estates. On these estates, there are, roughly, 71,000 acres under sugar-cane, 15,000 acres under rice and 2,000 acres under cocoanuts; while ground provisions, rubber, limes, coffee and cocoa would account for the remaining 1,000 acres.

The live stock were returned in 1919 as follows :—

Cattle	..	..	..	..	..	..	105,000
Other live stock	..	..	..	..	..	..	58,00

24. *Sugar.*—In 1919, 86,971 tons of sugar were produced from 70,876 acres of cane, giving an average of 1.22 tons of sugar per acre under cane. This is a very low average, comparable with that of India taken as a whole,

* A technical term used in British Guiana to denote roots like yam, sweet potatoes etc.

and far below that of countries such as Java and Hawaii. It is partly due to poor extraction by two mills, and partly to poor cane outturns on some of the estates. This latter result, however, is largely due to the fact that on most estates all the tillage is being done by hand. The best estates, however, get about $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of sugar to the acre.

25. *Rice*.—The product next in importance is rice. It is owing mainly to the initiative and enterprise of the East Indians that the rice industry has attained its present position, and promises, in the near future, to be the leading crop of the colony. There was a time when British Guiana had to import practically every pound of rice needed for local consumption. In the quinquennium, 1884-1888, only 2,500 acres were under rice and 43.5 million lbs. of rice had to be imported into the colony. By 1903, the average area under cultivation had increased to 15,000 acres, while the import had fallen to 18 million pounds. From that time onwards, the history of the industry is one of continuous and rapid development. By the end of 1913, the colony was able not only to meet its own requirements, but also to export about 10 million pounds. The highest development was reached in 1917 when the area under cultivation was 63,000 acres, and the quantity exported exceeded 32 millions of lbs. In 1920, the area under the crop was 58,000 acres, while the export consisted of 18 million lbs. of rice and 15 million lbs. of paddy, both being valued at about 1.7 million dollars.

26. The path of a rice-farmer in British Guiana has been beset with many obstacles, and he has had to contend against heavy odds, natural and otherwise. Not only has he had to face drought or floods for want of facilities for irrigation or drainage, but he has also had to live down the narrow prejudices of the conservative planters and the short-sighted attitude of the Government. As regards the prejudices of the planters, reference may be made to the evidence of certain witnesses before the Sanderson Committee, 1910, and the action taken by the Hon'ble Mr. Duncan in 1907 when he tried to get the Combined Court to prevent rice-growers from growing more than one crop of rice per year. So far as the attitude of the Government is concerned, East Indians complained to us not only about its indifference towards questions of irrigation and drainage, but also about the executive action taken in 1919-20 which placed an embargo on the export of rice, and practically led to the throttling of the industry. When Major Wood, then Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, visited British Guiana in the beginning of 1922, the elected members of the Combined Court presented an address to him. In that address, they made a reference to the condition of the rice-industry and said, "When it has not suffered from floods or drought, it has languished under legislation or Government restrictions, not always in its best interests." And they added "It has risen from small beginnings, unaided by capital or Government directions, and has hitherto been maintained under most distressing conditions." It speaks volumes, in the words of that address, "for the perseverance and industry of the persons engaged in it that it should have survived in its present dimensions." And it is gratifying to note that it is mainly the East Indians who have succeeded in building up this industry under such discouraging circumstances.

27. *Trade and Commerce.*—The colony's trade statistics for the period of eight years 1913—1918, are summarised below :—

Year.	VALUE OF EXPORT TRADE (EXCLUSIVE OF TRANSHIPMENTS.)			Value of import trade.	Value of Transhipment goods
	Local produce.	Other goods.	Total.		
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1913	9,565,844	501,052	10,129,896	7,750,988	397,880
1914	11,313,082	465,905	11,778,987	7,665,530	811,720
1915	14,833,824	529,416	15,363,240	8,796,247	651,181
1916	16,140,110	543,208	16,683,318	10,500,931	1,355,399
1917	18,253,716	709,353	18,963,069	13,947,440	1,733,439
1918	13,817,315	982,001	14,799,316	16,292,249	2,119,713

Canada is the only country with which British Guiana has a trade agreement, which came into effect in June 1913 for a period of 10 years. This agreement has had the effect of increasing the trade with Canada. The privileges granted under that agreement have, as far as this Colony is concerned, been unconditionally extended to the United Kingdom, Newfoundland, and all British possessions which are parties to the above convention.

23. *Currency.*—The standard coin of British Guiana is the British gold sovereign but other British coins are also in general use. In addition, there is a paper currency of dollar denomination, the dollar and the cent being reckoned as equivalent to 4s. 2d., and one half-penny, respectively. The paper currency is controlled by the Government as well as by the Colonial Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada. Government has reserved to itself the right to issue notes of the value of one dollar and two dollars, while the two Banks may each issue notes of five, twenty, and one hundred dollars.

29. *Communications.*—British Guiana has three separate lines of railway, the total length being 97½ miles only. For an area of 90,000 square miles, it has only 350 miles of public roads. Even if Municipal and Village roads are included, the total length does not exceed 480 miles. Compared with this, Trinidad, with an area of 1,754 square miles, has over 2,250 miles of roads; and Jamaica, with an area of 4,450 square miles, has over 6,560 miles of roads. The backwardness of the colony in the matter of communications is stupendous; and before the question of land settlement can be considered as a practical issue, the vast hinterland should be opened up so that the interior may become

easily accessible. There is a cattle trail to the Rupununi River in an advanced stage of construction, which will facilitate the bringing down of cattle from the upper savannahs to George Town.

30. *Land for settlement not available.*—The Government of British Guiana expressed a desire that the members of the Deputation should inspect the north-west district, the two savannahs up the Taipaeruma Creek in the County of Essequibo and the area round the Penal settlement at Bartica, with a view to examine the suitability of these localities for the proposed settlement of immigrants. Our esteemed colleague, Mr. Keatinge, who is an agricultural expert, visited all the three places. Mr. Tivary went with him up the Taipaeruma Creek which was, later on, visited by Mr. Pillai as well. Messrs. Pillai and Tivary also paid a short visit to Bartica. As far as the two savannahs and the land round about Bartica are concerned, they are utterly unsuitable for settlement, as the soil is very poor, and the savannahs, in addition, are practically always under water. In regard, however, to the north-west district, Mr. Keatinge was very highly impressed with its exceptional fertility, but in order to make it suitable for settlement, large capital is needed for clearing the land, making roads, etc. In regard to the question whether land for settlement is at present available, the views of the deputation are given in the next paragraph.

31. The alluvial clay soil on the coast is very rich and has been turned to excellent advantage by the various sugar estates which can command adequate capital; but the difficulties of drainage and general organization make these low-lying lands a very difficult proposition for a small holder, who can have only a few hundred dollars at his command. There are, however, places in the colony, which have all the advantages of the alluvial clay and peat, and are at the same time peculiarly favourable for small holders. But even where some organization with large funds at its disposal, is necessary to guide and assist the settlers and to make them the necessary advances if settlement is to be effected in an orderly and satisfactory manner, and not in a piecemeal fashion, unsatisfactory alike to the Colony and the settlers themselves. Every immigration scheme, which purports to import labourers, and subsequently, to settle them on the land, contains this great weakness, that no satisfactory means are shown for settling small holders on the land. Further, the land has not been protected against flooding, nor properly drained. A large number of East Indians are eager to take up suitable small holdings, but no such holdings are at present available for them in localities and under conditions in which an average small holder can make good.

SECTION IV.—POPULATION.

32. The total population of the colony was about 278,000 souls in 1891. No figures are available for 1901 as no census was taken in that year. The census report for 1911 recorded an increase of 18,000 from 278,000 to 296,000 souls in twenty years. At the last census held in 1921, the population rose to 297,700, thus showing an increase of only 1,700 as compared with 1911. The smallness of increase is accounted for by the influenza epidemic of 1918-19, which is estimated to have caused 12,000 deaths, and by the fact that

indentured immigration from India ceased in 1917, while 3,357 immigrants were repatriated to India during the years 1919 and 1920, under the terms of indenture (Appendix I).

33. Another interesting fact brought out in the report of the last census is that during the last fifty years, the growth of the population in the colony has been mainly due to immigration. The population in 1871 amounted in round figures to 194,000 souls, exclusive of all immigrants, while in 1921 it rose, excluding the number of immigrants, to 199,000, thus showing a natural "increment" of 5,000 only. The significance of this fact as well as the highly important part that immigration has played in the increase of the population in the colony should be borne in mind, when the question of sending out more emigrants to British Guiana arises for consideration.

31. *Analysis of Races.*—There were, roughly, 67,000 persons living in towns at the last census, while 66,000 persons lived on the sugar estates. Over 112,000 persons were found in villages, and 42,000 on farms and settlements. Only 8,000 were enumerated in the forest districts. If we classify the population according to races, we find that there were 3,000 Europeans, 9,000 "Portuguese," 125,000 East Indians, 2,000 Chinese, 117,000 Blacks, 30,000 persons belonging to the mixed races and 9,000 aborigines.

35. *East Indians.*—The total number of East Indians returned at the 1921 census, was 124,938 or 1,529 less than in 1911. Of the present East Indian population, 68 per cent. were born in the colony. There were 96,000 Hindus, 18,000 Mohammedans, 11,000 Christians, and 244 Parsis. Turning to occupations, we find 350 East Indians belonging to various professions, 430 employed as domestic servants, over 78,000 as agricultural laborers, including those working on sugar estates, and 2,500 classed under industries; while the number of the unoccupied or dependents (i.e., women engaged in domestic duties, children, etc.) is stated to be over 40,000.

36. *Sex.*—As the population contains a very large element of immigrants in its composition, there is bound to be a pronounced disparity in the numbers of the two sexes. This disproportion has been further aggravated by the indentured system under which forty women were sent out for every hundred men. In 1881 the number of females in the colony for every 1,000 males was 800, which rose to 834 in 1891, and has rapidly risen to 926 in 1911, and 968 in 1921. At present, however, only three races show an excess of females over males. Among the blacks and the coloured, there are 52.4 females to 47.6 males, while the Portuguese have 53 females to 47 males. Of the rest, the Europeans have 45 females to every 55 males and the Chinese 86 for every 100. It is among the East Indians that the disproportion of the sexes is most marked. Out of 125,000 East Indians in the colony, the number of females is only 55,800, giving a proportion of only 80 females to 100 males.

37. *Excess of males over females among East Indians.*—There were among East Indians in 1911, 20,000 females, i.e., 73 females to 100 males, and in 1921 13,000 females, i.e., 80 females to 100 males. Prior to 1911, the disproportion between males and females amongst the East Indians must have been greater, since amongst the indentured labourers brought to British Guiana the ratio of males to females was more than 2 to 1; and the fact that the number of

females is now number of males is due to the fact that 68 per cent. of the population are colony-born, amongst whom the number of males and females is approximately equal.

38. In this connection, it may be mentioned that from the commencement of immigration from India in 1838, when the first batch of East Indians landed on the shores of Demerara, to the cessation of the indentured system in 1917, a total of 239,000 Indian immigrants was introduced into the colony, of whom about 69,000 had been repatriated to India by the end of 1920.

SECTION V.—VITAL STATISTICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

39. During the ten years, 1911 to 1921, the total births recorded in the colony amounted to 92,660, and the deaths also amounted to 92,000. Amongst the East Indians, there were 40,660 births and 42,660 deaths during the same periods, so that there was a net loss of 2,000.

40. The following table gives the statistics for the whole colony as well as for the principal races from 1915 to 1919.

Births per mille.

		1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.
1. Europeans and Portuguese	..	18.4	19.0	21.5	20.0	19.5.
2. East Indians	..	32.6	25.5	27.6	23.3	21.6
3. Chinese	..	30.6	26.2	25.6	31.7	28.0
4. Blacks	..	29.5	26.2	27.0	25.2	26.8
5. Mixed Races	..	33.9	30.5	32.0	27.0	27.2
For the whole Colony	..	31.3	26.5	28.4	25.1	26.0

Deaths per mille.

1. Europeans (including Portuguese)	..	23.5	24.1	26.5	29.3	28.3
2. East Indians	..	28.8	27.1	33.1	40.4	49.3
3. Chinese	..	25.9	18.7	23.5	28.2	31.2
4. Blacks	..	28.4	28.4	29.9	35.7	33.2
5. Mixed Races	..	20.5	20.4	21.5	25.0	22.4
For the whole Colony	..	27.7	27.1	30.4	40.6	40.4

The figures tell their own tale. In the first place, during the five years, 1915-19, the death-rate per thousand among the East Indians was generally in excess of the colonial average, except in 1916 when both were equal. Taking the two years, 1918-19, when the influenza epidemic was causing havoc, we find that the community that paid the heaviest toll was the East Indian community. If the figures for 1918 are examined, it will be found that while the death-rate among the East Indian community shows an increase of 20.6 per mille over that of 1915, in the case of the Europeans, the Chinese, the Blacks and the mixed races, the excess amounts to 5.8, 2.3, 7.3 and 4.5 per mille, respectively. It is rather remarkable that only the East Indians should have been affected so seriously by influenza. This fact throws, we think, considerable light on the relative position which the East Indians occupy in the economic life of the colony.

41. In the second place, out of the above five years, four show an excess of deaths over births for the whole colony. This excess in the case of East Indians is generally accounted for by the preponderance of males over females amongst them. But the above explanation does not hold good in the case of other communities, such as the Blacks, the Europeans including the Portuguese, and the mixed races, that have more females than males. Moreover, if the reason assigned for this excess in regard to the East Indians were true, one would expect to find a similar state of things among the Chinese; but as a matter of fact, although they have 86 females to 100 males, the birth-rate among them is in excess of the death-rate in four out of five years, for which figures are given. The true cause for this regrettable state of things lies not in the disparity of the sexes, but has to be sought in the general insanitary condition of the colony and, so far as the East Indians are concerned, also in malnutrition due to the extremely low wages earned by them.

42. In this connection, we may briefly notice a statement made by the representatives of British Guiana, who came over to India in 1919, that the rate of mortality in their colony was lower than in other tropical countries. The following table provides a test for determining the correctness of this assertion :—

Deaths per thousand population.

				1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.
Grenada	..	..	..	13·2	21·2	24·0	17·4	20·6
St. Vincent	..	..	..	..	20·6	18·3	19·4	21·0
Trinidad and Tobago	..	..	..	..	..	21·2	20·4	21·2
Barbados	..	..	..	..	..	19·2	22·7	25·0
Jamaica	..	..	..	23·9	20·4	21·7	22·5	23·9
British Guiana	..	..	..	24·2	21·5	27·7	27·1	30·4

43. As the figures relating to the West Indian colonies in the above table are taken from a pamphlet called "the British Guiana Colonization Scheme", published in 1919 under the authority of the Colonization Committee, the figures may be accepted as correct. Those persons who admit that the general record of the colony in the matter of mortality has not been satisfactory, point to the comparatively better sanitary condition of the sugar estates, as shown by a lower death-rate among the labourers residing on the estates. The table below gives the relative figures :—

Deaths per mille.

			Total Colony.	East Indians on Estates (Indentured):
1916	..	..	27·1	17
1917	..	..	30·4	16
1918	..	..	40·6	36
1919	..	..	40·4	56
Average	..	..	34·6	31·2

This reasoning, however, omits to take note of the fact that the estates employ only those who are in the prime of their manhood, "sound in limb and sound in mind," and in every way fit for manual labour. The decrepit, the old, the weak and all those persons who have become incapacitated for hard labour,

have to leave the estates, and go to some public institution, or drift down to George Town and swell there the ranks of "jobbers." Under the indentured system, only those persons were selected for enlistment, who, after having been examined thrice in India by different medical authorities, were passed as fit. In these circumstances, it is only natural that the death-rate on the estates should be lower than in the colony. In order, therefore, to find out the true state of things in regard to the estates, it is desirable to compare British Guiana with, say, Trinidad which also used to import a similar class of labourers from India. If the rates of mortality among the indentured immigrants resident on the estates in both the colonies are compared, we find that while the death rate on the estates for 1919, an influenza year, was 56 per mille in British Guiana, it was only 12·5 in Trinidad in the same year; that is to say, there were more than four times as many deaths in British Guiana as there were in Trinidad. We append the following table, giving the death-rate per thousand among the indentured labourers on the estates in both the colonies from 1916 to 1919 :—

				British Guiana.	Trinidad.
1916	..	..	..	17	7·3
1917	..	..	..	16	4·2
1918	..	..	..	36	11·7
1919	..	..	..	56	12·6
Average for four years				31·2	8·9

The yearly average for four years from 1916 to 1919 yields practically the same proportion that we get for 1919, that is, nearly four times as high in the case of British Guiana as it was in Trinidad.

41. At this stage, the question naturally arises how does the death-rate among East Indians in British Guiana compare with that in India? If the point be superficially examined, it will be found that the rate of mortality in both the countries is practically the same, as the following table shows :—

Death-rate per mille.

Year.					BRITISH GUIANA.	
					East Indians on the Estates.	Whole East Indian population.
1915	..	..	..	..	20	20
1916	..	..	..	..	29	28
1917	..	..	..	..	33	33
1918	..	..	..	..	62	50
1919	..	..	..	..	36	48
1920	..	..	..	..	31	27
Average					37	35·8

This comparison, however, is on the face of it wrong and altogether misleading. The despatch which the Government of India sent along with the report of Messrs. McNeill and Chinnunlal to the Secretary of State for India pointed out the great difficulty in comparing the two rates, owing to the different conditions

prevailing in the two countries. An extract from that despatch, dealing with this point, is reproduced as Appendix II to our report. We should like to point out that before instituting any comparison between British Guiana and India, one vital consideration should be borne in mind. The East Indian population of British Guiana is divisible into two main classes; viz., (a) East Indians on the Estates, and (b) other East Indians residing in towns, villages, etc., so far as those resident on the estates are concerned, the death-rate among them is naturally very low, on account of the fact that, more than two-thirds of them are adults between the ages of 20—35 years. They were specially selected in India, after they had been thrice medically examined and declared fit. It should not be forgotten that till the close of 1917, about 3,000 emigrants were on an average sent every year from India to British-Guiana; and almost every year a little less than 1,000 immigrants, after at least 10 years' residence in the colony, were repatriated. So far as the estates are concerned, as soon as an East Indian Immigrant is found unfit or disabled, he is turned out. In these circumstances the resident population on the estates was kept in a state of high physical efficiency by the elimination of the weak, and the addition to the existing stock of the fresh arrivals from India. This two-fold process not only helped to keep the death-rate on the estates at a low figure, but it also had the effect of creating a false impression regarding the death-rate among the whole East Indian community in the colony. The two factors, viz., the high preponderance of the adult population on the estates in a state of full physical vigour, and the rejection of the disabled labourers, must be considered, before any comparison can be made between India and British Guiana. In order to do so, we must compare the death-rate among the East Indians in British Guiana, who are not resident on the estates with that in India. In order to arrive at the figure relating to the rate of mortality among these East Indians, it will be necessary to deduct the number of deaths among the immigrants on the estates from the number of deaths among the total East Indian population in the colony. In preparing the table given below, we have taken the mean population on estates as 62,000; and in the whole colony as 125,000.

Approximate death-rate per mille.

Year.					India.	Madras.	East Indians of estates in British Guiana.
1915	..	..	..	..	20	22	34
1916	..	..	..	..	29	22	32
1917	..	..	..	..	33	26	37
1918	..	..	..	..	62	43	51
1919	..	..	..	..	36	27	48
1920	..	..	..	..	31	22	31
Total for 6 years ..					221	162	236
Average for 6 years ..					37	27	39.3
Average of 4 years (omitting 1918 and 1919.)					30.75	23	33.5

The above table brings out the relative positions of British Guiana as compared with India and the Province of Madras. It may be added here that roughly, one-third of the East Indian population in the colony consists of the emigrants from Madras while the remaining two-thirds are drawn from various other provinces.

45. Before we proceed to give our impressions regarding the health conditions of British Guiana, we should like to refer to the opinions of the Colonial Secretary and the late Surgeon-General of British Guiana, regarding the paramount importance of giving precedence to the question of improving the sanitation of the colony, before embarking on a policy of further immigration. Their high and responsible positions as well as the unrivalled opportunities they had for acquiring a most intimate knowledge of the various problems affecting the welfare of that country give special weight to their views. We think that no apology is needed for quoting at length from their statements, so that the gravity of the problem may be clearly appreciated.

46. Mr. Clementi, the Colonial Secretary of British Guiana, submitted a report "On the Condition of the Colony of British Guiana during the Great European War and on the Chief Local Problems Awaiting Solution" in 1919, which is known as Combined Court Paper No. 21 of 1919. In this report Mr. Clementi says that, although the introduction of more immigrants is necessary for the development of the Colony, "the most pressing duty of the Government is to protect the health and the lives of the existing population; and to secure that, instead of the death-rate exceeding the birth-rate, as has too often been recorded in the Vital Statistics of British Guiana, there shall be a steady natural increment". And after dealing in great detail with the various aspects of the problem, he thus sums up the situation:—

"When Macaulay wished to bring home to readers of his History of England published in 1848, the progress in sanitation made in his day in the United Kingdom, he contrasted the conditions then prevailing with the by-gone times, 'when men died faster in the lanes of our towns than they now die on the coast of Guiana'. Seventy years have passed by, and it would no longer be fair to quote Guiana as typical of all that is insanitary. But taking a broad view of the health conditions in this colony, it must be admitted that there has been no case of plague or cholera in the last 40 years, though the last outbreak of yellow fever was in 1885 and of small-pox in 1904, and notwithstanding the fact that the five years, 1912-16 inclusive, constituted a record for health in British Guiana unequalled by any other quinquennium in the last fifty years, nevertheless a colony in which at frequent intervals the death-rate exceeds the birth-rate, and where malaria, enteric fever, ankylostomiasis, tuberculosis, and intestinal troubles are prevalent, cannot be deemed to be in a satisfactory state. Much arduous, unremitting and expensive work is imperatively necessary, before we can hope to rely on a natural yearly increment of the population; nor could

such natural increment suffice save in a very remote future to provide a population sufficient for developing the colony. *It would, however, be sheer folly, indeed it would be immoral, to take steps to introduce immigrants in large numbers into British Guiana, without at the same time taking the steps necessary to keep them alive and in good health.*" (The italics are ours.)

47. On another occasion, he again returned to the subject, and made an equally serious indictment of the policy of immigration pursued by the Colony in the past, and of the measures adopted for the preservation of the public health. Speaking in the Combined Court, when the resolution regarding the Colonization Scheme was under discussion, he said :—

"The mass of our population is an immigrant population and the history of immigration into British Guiana is a calamitous history. The chapter of calamities begins with the first immigrants who came here, Dutch, French and British, now classified in our Vital Statistics under the head 'Europeans other than the Portuguese'. I have not the time here to dwell upon the vicissitudes of our white colonists before British Guiana came into existence by the union of Essequibo and Demerara with Berbice in the year 1831; but I note that the census of March 1831 shows that at that date there were no Portuguese in the colony, that the population was then estimated to be 98,000 souls, and that the enumerated white colonists numbered 3,529 souls, 2,519 being males and 1,010 females. Now the estimated total of the White Colonists other than Portuguese at the end of 1917 was only 3,659 souls, 1,950 being males and 1,689 females, in an aggregate population of all races estimated to be 313,999 souls. Thus there are now fewer white men in British Guiana than there were in 1831, and relatively to the total population the white element has decreased from 3.6 per cent. to 1.1 per cent. during the past 86 years. These figures to my mind explain in epitome the stagnation from which this colony suffers. The vitalizing stream of colonists from the Mother Country flows very sparingly into British Guiana.

"Portuguese emigration from Madeira took place between the years 1835 and 1882, during which period there arrived 30,645 souls; while from the Azores in the year 1851 there came 164 souls. The Portuguese immigrants, therefore, numbered 30,809 souls in all; and, in view of this fact, it is distressing to record that on the 31st December 1917, the total Portuguese inhabitants in the colony numbered only 9,766 souls, 4,637 being males and 5,129 females.

"The nucleus of the black population in British Guiana was imported from Africa before 1807 the year in which the slave trade was abolished; and the report of the Registrar of Slaves for Demerara and Essequibo records that on the 31st of May 1832

they may be estimated at 86,162 souls, of whom 45,369 were males and 40,793 females. These figures can be relied upon within a small margin of error, for, when on the 1st August 1834 all slaves of British Guiana were emancipated, the number in respect of whom compensation was paid by the British Government was 84,916 souls. Now, at the end of 1917, the Negro population of the colony was estimated at 118,612 souls, 56,895 being males and 61,717 females; therefore, in 85 years our Black population has only increased by 32,450 souls. But the colonist's immigration statistics show that, between the years 1835 and 1892, there were introduced 40,813 immigrants of Negro Race from the West Indian Islands, as well as 13,355 Blacks from Africa. Thus, not only is there no natural increment in our Black population during the period of 85 years in question, but there has been a net decrease of 21,718 souls.

“ The history of Chinese immigration is equally deplorable. The first Chinese indentured immigrants arrived in British Guiana on the 12th January 1853, and the last reached George Town on the 17th March 1879. During that period there were introduced into the Colony a total of 14,002 Chinese immigrants, 11,894 being males and 2,108 females. Yet at the end of 1917 the estimated population of Chinese Race in British Guiana was no more than 2,810 souls, 1,573 being males and 1,237 females.

“ Nor is the case any better with respect to the East Indian Immigrants, who now form the largest racial element in our population. The first East Indian immigrants arrived in British Guiana in the year 1838 and from that time down to the cessation of indentured immigration from India with the arrival of the S. S. “ Ganges ” at George Town on the 18th April 1917, there were introduced into the colony a total of 238,979 East Indian immigrants. Nevertheless, on the 31st December 1917, the total East Indian population was estimated to be no more than 137,959 souls, 78,808 being males and 59,151 females. That is to say, for every one thousand East Indians introduced into the colony under the indentured system there now remain here only 572 souls—a little more than half. It must, of course, be remembered that, in accordance with the conditions of indentured immigration, 65,588 East Indians were sent back from British Guiana to their native country during the course of the seventy-nine years in question; but, even after making this allowance, we find that the present East Indian population is less by 35,482 souls than the number of immigrants introduced.

“ As regards the population of Mixed Race in the Colony, it now forms 10 per cent. of the whole and appears to increase slowly. Statistics on this point are first given in the census report of 1891, when the total number of persons of mixed race was returned

as 29,029 souls, 13,227 being males and 15,802 females. On the 31st December 1917, the total population of mixed race was estimated at 33,860 souls, 15,743 being males and 18,118 females, an increase of 4,831 souls in 26 years, or at the rate of 7 per mille per annum.

“ The case may be put in a nut-shell by pointing-out that the total population of British Guiana was returned at the census of 1811 as 19,151 souls and at the last census taken on the 2nd April 1911, as 296,011 souls; and the total number of immigrants introduced into the colony between the years 1835 and 1911 was 333,803 souls and that therefore seventy years after the census of 1811 the colony contained a population actually less in number than the immigrants introduced. These figures are a grave indictment of the colony's immigration methods in the past as well as of the measures taken in bygone years to preserve the public health. The inference to be drawn is very clear, namely, that the most pressing duty of the Government at the present time is to protect the health and the lives of the existing population and to see that instead of the death rate exceeding the birth-rate, as has too often been recorded in the vital statistics of British Guiana, there is a steady natural increment. Measures aimed at the prevention and curing of disease should therefore engage our most earnest attention. Improved sanitation is the paramount need of the colony to-day. I am well aware that, as Lord Cromer has said, ‘ improved sanitation is a bottomless financial abyss. Nevertheless it is absolutely, and it is immoral, to take steps to introduce immigrants into this colony without at the same time taking the steps necessary to keep them alive and in good health ’. (The italics are ours).

48. Let us now turn to Dr. Wroe, the late Surgeon General of the Colony, and see what he has to say on the subject. Addressing the joint meeting of the public bodies and representatives of British Guiana in George Town on the 27th January 1919, he said that there was sufficient labour available in the colony for developing not only all the acreage under cultivation but double that area, if mechanical appliances were utilized; and as regards sanitation, he made the following remarks:—

“ With regard to sanitation in the past, millions of dollars had been spent on immigration, whereas they could reel on the amount spent on sanitation in hundreds. That was not the right proportion. The sanitation maintained by the estates in the past was largely one that was the minimum that would satisfy the Indian Government. The question now was not what was the minimum in order to allow immigration to continue but what was the maximum to keep their labourers in the best conditions possible. He pleaded with the meeting to view the

question of sanitation in a more liberal spirit, and not deal with it in the pork-knocking spirit in which it had been dealt with in the past". (The italics are ours).

49. The "magnificent colony", as British Guiana has been described by one of its Governors, is, so far the coast-land is concerned,—and the rest of the country being practically empty does not concern us for the present—a land of marshy swamps and mosquitoes, of malaria and filariasis. As it is below the level of the sea, the problem of drainage is a difficult one. In these circumstances, the country is subject to inundations during the rainy season; and it is not an uncommon sight to see miles and miles of the country submerged under water. In the words of Mr. Clementi, the inhabitants of the coastal tract have to lead an amphibious life, and their houses surrounded by water on all sides present an appearance of "lake dwellings". On the sugar estates, canals run along and between the fields to facilitate the transport of sugar-cane to the factories, and to serve as channels of drainage. The canals on the dismantled estates are generally over-run with weeds and hyacinth. Moreover, for the construction as well as the upkeep of the roads, earth is dug out of the neighbouring fields on both sides, leaving pits for the accumulation of water. Similarly, villages have canals for purposes of drainage; and more often than not, they are not properly looked after, and, in consequence, are full of rank growths. A more ideal place for the breeding of mosquitoes it would be hard to discover. Another source of ill-health is to be found in the utter lack of any arrangements for getting pure water for domestic use. In the City of George Town those who can afford to store it utilise rain water for drinking and cooking. Others get their supply from the Municipal taps which are fed from a reservoir several miles away from the city by means of an open trench about 12 feet wide.

50. Among 882 school children in George Town examined by Dr. Rose, 865 suffered from infection from a certain kind of worms, which can only be contracted by swallowing the germs contained in human excreta, and in no other way. "The infection of so large a percentage of children with these parasites", writes Dr. Rose, "is due directly to the fact that human excrement in the town is not disposed of in a safe and efficient way, but is allowed to come into contact with the persons, the food and drink of the children". "There is no more unpleasant chapter" he adds, "in the story of the insanitary conditions of these schools than that which is concerned with the arrangements for the disposal of excreta. Surface soil pollution is apparent and extensive. The privies provided are wooden buildings frequently dilapidated, giving free access to flies and animals, the seats are strained with excreta; nor do the floors escape; the odours are such as to discourage their use, one would imagine, by sensitive children. In the almost universal absence of urinals, I have seen the ground around the school and the pillars of the building used frequently for this purpose instead. Moreover, the privy accommodation is, in many cases, inadequate, nor is there any attempt at provision of toilet paper or any substitute for such an article. One has only to visit these buildings to understand such facts as that 56·3 per cent. of the children suffer from infection with intestinal

deaths from intestinal troubles. And yet we have extended our artesian wells so slowly that from 1915 to the present date, we doubt whether we have fifty wells throughout the whole of our coastal fringe".* (By Edgar Beckett, F. L. S.).

52. The same authority continues :—

"The decrease in all our immigrants is a deplorable comment on our health conditions. If we intend to introduce the colonisation scheme we are morally bound to pay attention to our health and sanitary problems. There can be no question about that. It is a moral obligation. We cannot introduce people here to die. Our immigration schemes of the past, when the census figures are studied, prove a damnable indictment against the public health measures of those times".† (By Edgar Beckett, F. L. S.).

53. Efforts in all directions are no doubt being made to effect improvement in the sanitary conditions of the colony. But they are slow and unsteady for want of funds and lack of enthusiasm on the part of those who can exercise some influence in this direction. The *Daily Chronicle* (British Guiana) of the 8th March 1922 brings out this fact very well when it says, "It has also to be admitted that the sugar planters had no interest in furthering schemes of a similar nature, (i.e., of drainage and irrigation) elsewhere, short-sightedly failing to see that the omission to provide these schemes was sap-ping their labour supply at the very sources; since, as a consequence, the most appalling wastage of child and even adult life took place". (The italics are ours). And that it is not wrong in holding the planters responsible for this state of things is shown by the fact that "the influence of British owners (of the sugar estates in British Guiana) through their local representatives on the Government and politics of the country is very great".‡

SECTION VI.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

I.

54. No other question falling within the scope of our enquiry bristles with so many difficulties, or is likely to give rise to such differences of opinion, as the one with which we are going to deal in this section. At the same time, we are conscious of its prime importance; for it is in reality the crux of the problem, and upon it depends whether, even if other conditions prove satisfactory, labour emigration as part of a colonisation scheme is to be permitted, or not.

55. *Difficulties of arriving at Average of Earnings.*—Field labourers in British Guiana are paid by piece-work; wages, therefore, are not fixed but depend upon so many variable factors that the earnings of one group of labourers differ from those of another, though both may be engaged on similar tasks. They fluctuate from season to season; and, even in the same season, from week

* *Vide* The "Progress" No. of the *Times* of British Guiana, pages 142-143.

† *Vide* The "Progress" No. of the *Times* of British Guiana, page 147.

‡ The *Historical Geography of British Colonies*, by Lucas, page 293.

to week, on account of variations in the weather. Then, all tasks are not paid for at the same rate; neither is the working capacity of two men alike. In the case of an individual employed on a particular estate, how much he earns in a week, again, depends on where he has been allotted his task, as the nature of the soil varies. Another, and by no means unimportant, factor in this connection is whether a certain estate is paying or not, because there is a marked tendency to pay higher rates on a prosperous estate than on another that is either just paying its way or running at a loss. Over and above all these factors, is the consideration whether at any given moment the supply of labour exceeds the demand, or *vice versa*. The above causes are purely economic, but even on the sugar estates which are, as we were repeatedly told, "not philanthropic institutions, but business concerns run on business lines," the human factor does to a certain extent modify the action of the economic forces, and in no small measure determines the amount of earnings. It arises from differences among the managers, overseers and other subordinate staff in temperament, the sense of humanity, and an appreciation of what is due to labour: and is partly responsible for variations in wages from estate to estate, and also in the weekly earnings of individuals on the same estate. It would therefore be a wrong method to adopt, in working out the average wage of a labourer, to pick out half a dozen best workers, or the highest wage earners, (as they are called in the reports of the Immigration Department) from the best paying estates and to strike an average. The right course to follow is to take the best as well as the worst workers belonging to the good and bad estates alike, and find out the average by taking their earnings in both good and bad months.

56. *Cost of living*.—Similarly, it is not easy to find out what the average cost of living is. It varies from individual to individual, and the factors causing these differences are just as complex as those relating to wages. Personal habits, customs, idiosyncracies and surroundings as well as the nature of the work, are all responsible in a greater or less degree for variations in the cost of living. It is not always considerations of mere marginal utility that impel an individual to purchase this thing or that, and to indulge his fancy occasionally for better food than regulation rations or one more *kurta* than is laid down in the scale of the Immigration Department. It is a mistake to regard the labourer as a machine, ignoring altogether the human element in him. Besides food, clothing and implements, he requires relaxation every now and then, and has to provide occasionally for religious ceremonies and the entertainment of guests. Here, again, the average can only serve as a rough indication of what, in our opinion, may be the cost of living in the case of an average labourer on the basis of the current rate of prices. We have thought it desirable to refer to the above difficulties with the twofold object, of showing that in arriving at our conclusions, we have made due allowances for these variable factors, and of suggesting that certain estimates given below are not to be regarded as safe bases for calculation.

57. *Hours of work*.—By far the greater part, roughly 90 per cent. of the work on a sugar estate is piece-work as mentioned above. Forking, cane-cutting, punt-loading and weeding constitute the bulk of the work, the first three for able-bodied men and the last for men of inferior physique

and women. A very small percentage of labourers on an estate is also paid by the day. Skilled workers, most of whom are non-Indians, are paid by the week. As regards the number of hours, we were informed that ordinarily an unskilled labourer had to work for 7 hours a day, excluding stoppages. In the case of factories, however, we were told by Messrs. Brassington and Anderson of the Sugar Planters' Association in the course of their evidence that the number of hours varies from 12 to 15 a day. The representative of the British Guiana Labour Union, as well as the labourers, complain that even in the case of field-work, the hours range from 10 to 12 a day. We have also received a number of written statements from labourers, in which it is stated that they have to work in factories from 15 to 18 hours and in fields from 9 to 11 hours a day. As early as 1871, the Royal Commission, appointed to enquire into the allegations made by Sir William DesVocux of ill-treatment of indentured immigrants in British Guiana, stated their conclusions regarding the hours of work as follows:—"The average number of hours which the labourers work in the buildings is about 15 a day; but we have found instances where they had been working for 18 to 22 hours without any change of hands and without any extra pay given. This was the case on Skeldon, Canefield, Johanna Cecilia, and Leonora estates. The people were not always hard at work the whole time, but they had to remain at their post because the work was drawn out, and, when work was over, had only two or three hours' sleep before beginning again. In some cases this only happened occasionally; in others it lasted for many successive days, omitting Sundays." We may add that although there has been some improvement as regards the hours of work since 1870, the difference between the two statements regarding the hours of work in fields, is more apparent than real. During the slack season when the factories are not working, the hours of work are, as stated by the planters, between 7 and 8, if we exclude the time spent in walking a distance of 1 to 5 miles from the ranges where the labourer lives to the back dams where he has to work, and in getting back. But when milling operations are resumed and there is heavy pressure of work, labourers are required to work as many hours in fields as are alleged by them, in order to keep the mills going.

58. *Days of work in a week.*—On an average, the total number of working-days in a week does not exceed five, Sundays being generally days of rest. The first half of Monday is usually spent in the allotment of work, while Saturday being pay-day, practically all work is suspended at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The managers told us that the labourers did not work for more than 5 days. This fact is very often adduced in support of the statement that the rate of wages is very high; otherwise, it is said, sheer necessity would drive them to work for a longer period. It is also stated by the planters that the labourers have been so much demoralised by the very high wages earned in 1920, when they could live for two days on one day's earnings, that they cannot now shake off habits of laziness then formed. If it is due to mere disinclination to work, and not to the exhausting nature of field work, then it is wrong to suggest that these habits were of recent growth. It appears from the report of the Royal Commission of 1871 that the Indian immigrants in British Guiana used even in those days to work for 4 days a week; and that some worked 5,

and in the buildings 6 days. (*Vide* report No. 6-393 of 1871, page 99, paragraph 327). We have gone through the reports of the Immigration Department from 1899-1900 right up to 1920, and in several of them the same statement is repeated. This practice of working for 4½ days or 5 days seems to have become almost a tradition among the labourers, dating back to a time when laziness was a criminal offence under the indentured system. It is, moreover, difficult to reconcile this charge of laziness with another statement frequently made that the Indian is continuously working, working either on the estate or in his rice-field; and that work is his one passion. He is said by competent authorities to be industrious, steady, regular in his work and thrifty. The latest witness to the industrious character of East Indians is the writer of the *Peace Handbook on British Guiana* in 1920, published by the historical section of the British Foreign Office, who says that the British Indian immigrants are thoroughly acclimatized and work hard. Either of the two pictures may be true; but both cannot be true at one and the same time. Therefore, there can be only two possible explanations for the alleged laziness; either the labourer finds other work more paying, or the work on the estate is so exacting that it is not possible for him to bear the strain for more than 5 days in a week. The labourers maintain that field work is so exhausting that it is difficult for them to go on working for more than 5 days in a week from year's end to year's end. We are inclined to take the latter view, although there is some amount of truth in the first. That they preferred *gaol* to working on an average for more than 5 days a week during indenture shows that there were some other causes responsible for it than habitual laziness. A resident labourer, though nominally free, has to live under conditions of economic dependence. He has to obey the manager on pain of having to vacate the estate range and sleep on the dam. In the terms of the contract offered in 1919 by the British Guiana Government to intending emigrants from Barbados, work for at least 5 days a week, Sundays excepted, was guaranteed, as long experience had shown that an average man could only work 5 days.

There is also another aspect of this question. A number of labourers gave us the following reason for the loss of such a large percentage of working days in the year. During the slack season as well as in times of depression when there was little work to be done, the estate authorities would naturally cut down the amount of work, thereby reducing the number of days actually worked in a week. The Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo bore this out in his evidence before us, and he as well as the representative of the Labour Union complained that at the present time, the number of days in a week for which work could be had on the estates had been considerably reduced. But it may be suggested that as field work is task work, it is open to the labourer to work for so long as he chooses. Apparently, it is so, but the manager, by regulating the severity of the task, determines the minimum period of work.

59. *Current Wages*.—Another fact that deserves special notice in this connection relates to the sense in which the expression "Current Wage" is generally understood. When the Hon'ble Dr. Nunan, chairman of the deputation from British Guiana, was being examined by the Committee of the Imperial Legislative Council, he stated in reply to a question that in British

Guiana the new comers would be paid at the current rate. But he did not explain whether he was referring to the rate current on the sugar estates or elsewhere; though there is considerable difference between the two rates. In the course of our investigations, we asked the representative of the Sugar Planters' Association to explain the reason for the discrepancy between the wages paid to an unskilled adult male labourer on the sugar estates and that paid to him by say, the Public Works Department. The difference between the two rates was so great as to attract notice. In 1921, while the average wage earned per day on the sugar estates was 43 cents on the basis of 5 days per week, labourers working on the Sea Defence Wall under the Public Works Department were being paid 96 cents per day, or practically double the rate on the sugar estates. In reply to our question, the Hon'ble Mr. Brassington, after remarking that the Government departments were extravagant, said—and this is the relevant portion of his reply—that as the estates provided free houses, medical relief and such other benefits, they were justified in paying less. On being further asked to state whether those labourers who were not living on estates and therefore not enjoying these benefits were paid higher wages, he said, “No.” This leads to two conclusions: (i) that because of these benefits the wages paid to resident labourers are 50 per cent. less than the current rate on Government works; and (ii) that non-resident labourers on estates are not being paid at a higher rate than resident labourers, even though the former do not enjoy the benefits available to the latter. We think that the above explanation of the phrase, “current rate,” will remove the impression that it was exclusive of benefits. It therefore amounts to this, that the non-resident labourer has to be satisfied with less than what the resident labourer gets, including the benefits. This disparity accounts for the bitterness of feeling among the free labourers that existed once against the indentured immigrants and now continues against the resident labourers who are, as pointed out by the Hon'ble Mr. Webber, living in a state of economic bondage; thus enabling the planters to get more labour at a cheaper rate.

60. *Husband “fined” if Wife does not work.*—An incident arising out of this system of benefits is that on a majority of estates if a married woman who is physically fit and free to work absents herself from the field or does not care to work, 2s. are deducted from her husband's weekly pay-bill, and refunded to him, it is said, only when she turns up on the field. In case she persistently refuses to work, her husband is fined 2s. per week, week in and week out, the excuse being that it represents her portion of the rent for the house in which she lives with her husband and which he is entitled to get free as one of the benefits available to resident labourers on the estate. We discussed these points with several managers. After pointing out to them the grave injustice of punishing the husband for the “fault” of his wife, we asked if it was fair and proper for them to put pressure on the husband with the object of coercing him to make his wife work, even when he did not want her to do so. Their point of view would seem to be that every one living on the estate must work; otherwise even the wife of a labourer must pay for the privilege. The estate authorities apparently cherish the idea that a labourer is nothing more than a machine. Being unable any longer to make a wife work by the penal

clauses of the indenture system, they are resorting to this device in order to continue the old system under which every labourer including the wife of a labourer had to work. It was admitted that if this fact were known in India, it would have a deterrent effect on the immigration of families; and yet they do not seem inclined to alter the practice. In these circumstances there appears to be some justification for the allegation frequently made that the mentality generated by the indentured system still persists and that many more years must elapse before the employers will be able to adjust themselves to the new order of things.

61. *Wages in 1912.*—Messrs. McNeill and Chimmannal, when dealing with the question of wages on sugar estates, gave in their report extracts from a memorandum of the then Acting Immigration Agent General, and practically adopted the rates given therein as correct for the year 1912. We have also received from the present Acting Agent General a similar memorandum for 1921. "The weekly average (including females as well as males, children, invalids and convalescents) for the period of 4 years ending 1912," proceeds the memorandum for that year, "has been \$1-17½C. On the assumption that all the workers worked for 6 days, the daily average is 19·6 cents. Assuming for a fact, as it is, that immigrants do not work for more than 5 days a week on an average, the weekly average of 1·17½ dollars gives an all round daily average of 23·5 cents." It goes on to say, "In 1912 there were 30 estates which employed indentured labour. On these estates the total selected earnings (of 10 shovelmén and 10 male and female weeders in 12 weeks) amount to 13,166·16 dollars; this divided by $20 \times 12 \times 30$ gives practically the highest weekly average per unit. This refers to only field work, earnings in the factory not being dependent on rates. Of the above amount, 7,588·93 dollars were earned by 3,600 shovelmén; 5,577·13 by 3,600 women and weakly men, showing a weekly average of 2·11 dollars for shovelmén and 1·5 dollars for the others. Taking both together, the weekly average per unit was 1·83 dollars."*

62. *Wages in 1921.*—As regards the rate of wages in 1921, we give below the important portions from the memorandum of the present Acting Agent General:—

- "1. The weekly average per worker (including females as well as weakly males) for 1921 was \$2·17.
2. This amount is arrived at by taking the total sum paid out in the year by all the estates from which statistics were obtained and dividing by the total workers in the gangs employed from week to week on those estates, namely, dollars 1,515,951·76 divided by 698,481 = 2·17 dollars.
3. On the assumption that the workers all worked 6 days, the daily average is 2·17 dollars divided by 6 = 36·1 cents.

* * * * *

- "6. At each monthly visit to a sugar estate, the Immigration Agent obtains an average of the earnings for the week previous to the visit

* There are six working days in a week.

(which may occur at any time during the month) of the 12 shovelmen who have earned most in that week and similarly the average of 6 male weeders and 6 female weeders. In 1921 there were 38 estates visited from which these earnings were selected. The average of these $12 \times 12 \times 38$ shovelmen in 1921 was 78 cents a day; of the $6 \times 12 \times 38$ male weeders, 74 cents a day and of the female weeders 54 cents a day. As at the time of the Delegates' Report of 1913, the East Indians employed themselves also on their own enterprises of rice-growing, cattle breeding, etc.

"7. It may be added that the average earnings per day worked in 1921 is as follows:—

(Berbice) No. 1. Immigration Department—

Shovelmen	..	..	..	..	..	57.6 cents.
Male Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	46.7 "
Female Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	37.7 "

(E. C. D.) No. 2. Immigration Department—

Shovelmen	..	..	..	..	..	56.3 cents.
Male Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	43.4 "
Female Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	43.4 "

(E. B. & W. C. D.) No. 3. Immigration Department—

Shovelmen	..	..	..	..	..	50.3 cents.
Male Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	54.1 "
Female Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	43.4 "

(Essequibo) No. 4. Immigration Department—

Shovelmen	..	..	..	..	..	52.1 cents.
Male Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	43.4 "
Female Weeders	..	..	..	..	..	32.5 "

"8. In addition to the sum of \$1,515,954.76 mentioned in paragraph 2 the sum of \$173,667.91 was paid during 1921 to the less routine 'Task' and 'Creole' gangs. Both these sums relate almost exclusively to field work."

63. The comparison of the two memoranda shows that the latter has been so drawn up as to render any comparison between the rates for 1912 and 1921 impossible. While the one gives the average earnings for men, women, invalids, convalescents and children, the other excludes children, invalids and convalescents from the number of workers. In the same way, while in the former, the weekly averages are given for the highest wage-earners among shovelmen and weeders, the latter does not clearly state whether the average earnings of highest wage-earners are per working day or per day worked, and the difference between the earnings per working day and per day worked is so considerable as to render any conclusions based on the comparison of the two figures

absolutely worthless. It is to be regretted that the present Immigration Agent General could not give figures in a form which would have enabled us to compare the rates for these two years. Assuming, however, after the exclusion of the earnings of the "Creole gangs," (i.e., child labour,) invalids, etc., from the total amount paid in wages in 1912, that the daily average in a week of six days for an adult in that year was 23 cents, we find that there has been an increase of about 57 per cent. in the rate of earnings per working day, i.e., from about 23 cents in 1912 to 36.1 cents in 1921.

64. *Wages in 1922.*—In 1912, the best workers among shovelmen of 30 estates earned 35.1 cents and in the case of weeders belonging to the same plantation, the rate was 26.8 cents *per working day*. According to the present Acting Immigration Agent General, the average earnings of a shovelman amounted to 78 cents., that of a male weeder to 74 cents, and of a female-weeder to 51 cents *per day worked* in 1921. We collected figures relating to wages from certain estates. For the purpose of this report, we shall confine ourselves to the figures taken from the pay-books of the *Rose Hall Estate* in Berbice, which has the reputation of being one of the best managed estates in the Colony. We took figures for 8 weeks from the 1st January to the 24th February, 1922, during three of which grinding was going on, when every one was made to work at a high pressure. It is therefore obvious that the wages during the period selected would be exceptionally high. Let us take first the figures relating to shovel gangs. Out of the five highest earners, we found that 3 were headmen or *sundars*, and we had therefore to exclude them. Of the remaining two, Mohan and Sanichar, each worked for 5 days in the week ending the 24th February and earned 272 cents; that is to say, 48 cents per working day or 51.4 cents per day worked. Mohan worked for 33 days during the period of 8 weeks and earned 1,672 cents, giving a daily average of 35 cents; while Sanichar's earnings for 31 days during the same period amounted to 1,432 cents in 8 weeks, with a daily average of about 30 cents. But if we take their average earnings per day actually worked, we find that it was 51 and 48 cents for Mohan and Sanichar, respectively. Compared with the daily average for the highest earners among shovelmen in 1912, the rate of earnings of either Sanichar or Mohan does not seem to have gone up at all.

Turning to those whose wages on the last week in the period referred to were lowest, we find that Ram Lagan No. 1 earned by working on 36 days during these 8 weeks, 1,264 cents, which gives a daily average of 35 cents per day worked, or 27 cents per working day; while in the case of Ram Lal No. 1, the total earnings amount to 896 cents for 29 days' work during 8 weeks, giving an average of about 31 cents per day worked or nearly 19 cents per working day. If we take the earnings of the whole gang, we find that the average rate was nearly 38.6 cents for shovelmen per day worked. In the case of weeders the earnings are even lower. The average per day worked was roughly 30.7 cents for men and 26.2 cents in the case of women. Similarly, taking the earnings of the shovelmen's gang of the *Albion Estate* for the same period, when grinding was done for 4 weeks, we find that the average rate was 48.8 cents per day worked.

65. The above facts may, for the sake of convenience, be presented in a tabular form thus:—

	1921.	1922.
	Per day worked. Average for the whole colony.	Per day worked. Rose Hall Estate.
	Cents.	Cents.
Shovelmen	68	38·6
Male weeders	49	30·7
Female weeders	38	26·2

66. *Wages in 1870.*—In this connection, it may be of interest to note the earnings in 1870 of the best workers per day worked. The Royal Commission of 1871 say in paragraph 368 of their report as follows:—"Mr. Kelly has favoured us with some returns, showing the wages earned by 16 of the labourers on his estate. From the number of days they have worked, and the amounts they have earned, we infer that they were first class men, taking all of them together, they have averaged more than 5 days' work in a week throughout the year. The best man worked for 238 days, and averaged 19 cents a day; and he who earned least worked for 178 days and averaged 30 cents a day. From the returns of Messrs. Field and Kelly together with the tables referred to and other data already given, it is evident that very few immigrant labourers average 48 cents a day for 5 days in a week. It will also be seen that of those classed as effectives those who earn about 36 cents a day, are few compared with those who earn from 21 to 36 cents." On the *Albion* Estate in 1870, effective male Indian adults averaged 32½ cents and effective females 26½ cents per day worked in the year.

67. *Recapitulation.*—To sum up, we find that Mohan of the *Rose Hall* whose case is noted above, earned during the period of 8 weeks 35 cents as against the average of 36·1 cents per working day for the best workers among shovelmen in 1912. Secondly, it would be seen that in the case of the selected shovelmen in 1921 the average of 78 cents per day worked on the basis of the highest earnings in one particular week instead of several weeks, is likely to create a wholly erroneous impression that the best workers could earn as much as that all the year round. For instance, Mohan is found to have earned not more than an average of 49 cents per day worked in 8 weeks, as compared with 51·4 cents per day worked in one particular week. It is remarkable that in the year 1922, Mohan who is among the highest wage-earners on the *Rose Hall* for the week ending 21st February should be found not to have exceeded the average of 49 cents per day worked earned by the best worker of Mr. Kelly half a century ago. In the same way, the earnings of the lowest earners for the above

week, viz., Ram Lagan 1 and Ram Lal 1 of the same estate averaged in 8 weeks 35 and 31 cents, respectively, per day, as compared with 30 cents earned by one of Mr. Kelly's labourers who earned least fifty years ago.

68. As compared with the *Rose Hall*, the *Port Mourant* may show higher results, while estates like *Mara and Friends*, a lower average. As a result of the examination of the pay sheets of some estates as well as from personal inquiries made by us from a large number of labourers, we have come to the conclusion that broadly speaking, the scale of wages on a sugar estate may, at the present time, be taken as 24 cents ranging between 24 and 30 cents per working day for all classes of workers, as compared with 30·1 cents in 1921 when the rate was admittedly higher. We should like to add that we are satisfied that our estimate does in no way err on the side of strictness. On the other hand, on the Sea Defence Wall a male labourer gets now 76 cents a day as compared with 96 cents in 1921. The current rate for male labourers working on the Sea Wall Road are 84 cents and on the Public Works Department yards 106 cents per day, respectively.

69. The following table exhibits the fluctuations in the average weekly earnings of an adult male between 1870 and 1919 :—

Years.						Average weekly earnings of an adult male.	As compared with 1913-14 for which the index number is 100.
						s. d.	
1870	..	..	..	..	..	over 5 3	105
1908	..	..	..	..	..	4 0	80
1913-14	..	..	..	..	..	5 0	100
1915	..	..	..	..	..	5 2	103·5
1916	..	..	..	..	..	5 7	117·0
1917	..	..	..	..	..	6 3	121·5
1918	..	..	..	..	..	6 11	133·5
1919	..	..	..	..	..	7 10	157·0
1920*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

70. *Relation between Wages and prices in 1913 and 1920.*—Before leaving the subject of wages, we should like to give prominence to the fact that some of

*The figure for 1920 has been omitted, as the tables of earnings have been omitted from the Report for that year, thus making it impossible to check the figure for 1920, given in the Report for 1919.

the sugar estates paid in wages to all classes and races of their employees the sum of over £5,894,000 in 1920 as against \$1,982,000 in 1913. (Appendix V). We asked the representative of the British Guiana Sugar Planters' Association who supplied the above figures, to give us information also about the profits, made by the sugar estates, the prices realised per ton of sugar, the number of labourers employed and the amounts paid to each race and class of workers for both the years under comparison. We regret to say that we have not received the required information. So we are unable to test the correctness of the inferences which the above figures may suggest. However, the table of the prices of different commodities in 1913 and 1919, respectively, given in the Report of the Immigration Department for 1920 shows that the increase in wages for 1920 was wholly due to the abnormal rise in the cost of living for 1920 as compared with 1913. Along with this abnormal rise in the retail prices, there was also another factor at work, making for increase in wages. Rice was competing with sugar for labour; while tempted by the great rise in the price of rice, such of the labourers as could afford were forsaking sugar estates for rice farming. It was the stress of these twofold causes as well as the strong agitation among the employees who had been hard hit by the extraordinary rise in the price of food-stuffs, that appear to have forced the planters to give them increased wages. But as soon as the sugar market began to show signs of depression, there was an immediate cut of 25 per cent. in the wages during the latter part of 1920, and further reductions have been made since then, as the result of the downward tendency shown by sugar though the retail prices of the food-stuffs and cloth have yet to come down to the level touched by the wages.

71. *1914 and 1919 compared.*—A study of the figures relating to wages for 1914 and 1919 throws further light on the question whether wages for 1920 showed an increase over those for 1913-14, proportionate to the rise in the price of sugar during the same period. We are unable to give the daily average earned by men and women respectively for 1920, because the usual work and wages return has been omitted for the first time since 1913-14 from the report for 1920. However, from the annual reports of British Guiana we have been able to ascertain the quantity of sugar exported and their respective values for the years 1914 and 1919. The appendix III gives the wages earned by an adult male labourer on the sugar estates per working day as well as the quantity and value of sugar exported for each year from 1913-14 to 1919.

72. We find that, roughly, 83,000 tons of sugar valued at £2,473,000 were exported in 1919, as compared with 107,000 tons worth £1,575,000 exported in 1914. It shows that while sugar sold at the rate of £14.70 per ton in 1914, it fetched £29.74 per ton in 1919. In the light of these facts and the retail prices of food-stuffs prevailing in 1914 and 1919 respectively, the figures relating to the average earnings per day are most significant. The average per working day in 1919 was 31.4 cents for men and 15.9 cents for women, or 26.8 cents per worker on the basis of 19 males to 8 females on the estates. Compared to this, the earnings per working day in 1913-14 amounted to 20 cents for men and 9.9 cents for women, or 17 cents per worker on the basis of 10 men to 4 women. This gives an increase of 58 per cent. in the daily average earnings

per worker during the period of these 6 years, although the price of sugar had gone up 100 per cent. and food-stuffs were dearer by over 138 per cent. (*vide* appendix IV).

73 Let us now consider the relation between wages and the price of a ton of sugar in 1913-14 and 1920, respectively (*vide* appendix V). In 1913-14 when £1,575,000 were realised by the export of 107,000 tons of sugar, the total amount paid in wages by certain sugar estates to all classes and races of workers in 1920 was 1,982,000 \$ = £412,916, or 26·2 per cent. of the total value of the sugar exported. But in 1920, when 83,800 tons of sugar worth £1,193,000 were exported, the total wages amounted to \$ 5,894,000 equivalent to £1,227,917, or 29·2 per cent. of the total value of the sugar exported. In other words, the ratio between the amount of wages and the value of sugar exported in 1920 was practically the same as in 1913-14. But while the price of sugar per ton showed in round figures an increase of 210 per cent. (from £14·70 in 1913-14 to £50 in 1920) and the retail prices of food-stuffs had gone up roughly by 271 per cent. in the interval, the rate of wages in 1920 increased by 197 per cent. only, as compared with 1913. It is thus clear that the labourer did not get in 1920 an increase in his wages even to the extent of the rise in the retail prices of the necessities of life, let alone the full benefit of the abnormal increase in the price of sugar in 1920, as compared with 1913.

II

74 *Cost of living*—Coming to the question of the cost of living, we may begin by considering the memorandum on this subject prepared by the present Immigration Agent, which is reproduced *in extenso* (appendix VI.) He estimates the weekly cost of living as follows:—

Class of worker.	Cost of food.	Cost of clothing.	Cost of implements.	Total cost.
	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.
1. Shovelman	185	33	10	228
2. Male Weeder	185	33	10	228
3. Female Weeder	185	20	4	209

Further, on the income side, he assumes that the labourers are earning in 1922 as much as they did in 1921. In that year, the average amount earned per day worked by different classes of workers was:—

	Cents.
For Shovelmen	56
For Male Weeders	49
For Female Weeders	38

On this basis, he arrives at the conclusion that after 10 years' stay in British Guiana, a shovelman would be able to save 494 dollars, and male and female weeders 284 and 53 dollars respectively.

75 Even a most cursory examination of the above estimates, assuming them to be correct, would reveal that in framing them, the human element in the labourer has not been taken into account; and that, as a consequence, no provision has been made for meeting the expenditure on religious ceremonies, such as the recitation of the "*Bhagrat*" and the "*Satyanarayana's katha, etc.*," charity offerings to temples, feasting priests, entertaining guests, and occasional trips, and similar other items of expenditure. As Mr. Jack, I.C.S., says in his book on "*The Economic Life of a Bengal District*". "In the house of a Hindu, certain ceremonies and entertainments are obligatory." The same is true, though to a much smaller extent, in the case of Mohamadians and Christians. Personal idiosyncracies in matters of dress and food cannot be ignored altogether, when we are dealing with human beings who are not, like the inmates of a jail, to be fed on prescribed rations or clothed in regulation dress. In the case of East Indian women, again to quote the words of Mr. Jack, "it may reasonably be urged that jewellery of some kind is a necessity, not a luxury." Some allowance should therefore be made for these trinkets in any true budget; but taste and caprice enter so largely into the amounts spent by different families or individuals that an average becomes extremely difficult to estimate. There is yet another item of expenditure which should be provided for. Labourers in British Guiana, as all the world over, do marry and multiply; and by marrying and multiplying, they incur additional expenditure. And although the children of immigrant labourers are said to begin earning after they are 8 years old, nevertheless they have to be supported by their parents until they have been absorbed in the Creole gangs. Here, again, it is difficult to arrive at any average figure. But a rough, very rough, calculation can be made. In 1919 there were in round figures about 61,000 East Indians on the sugar estates, of whom 42,000 were adults and 19,000 children. Roughly speaking, there were then about 10,000 children who would not be working in the Creole gangs, and so must have been supported by their parents. Let us further assume that each child would cost only 3 dollars a month—surely a most conservative estimate. On this basis, the average cost to every adult on the estates of maintaining children works out at about 9 dollars a year. Similarly, we should set apart another 6 dollars a year for "extras," such as items of expenditure under religion, etc.

76. Now add (9 plus 6)=15 dollars per year to the estimate of expenses prepared by the Immigration Agent General; and the budget of an average worker for 10 years (at the end of which he or she is entitled to get an assisted return passage) would be as follows:—

A. Income.

Dollars.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| (1) Wages earned in 10 years at the average rate (for 1921) | 1,083.00 |
| of 36.1 cents per working day for 300 days in a year | |
| = $361 \times 10 \times 300$ divided by 100. | |

B. Expenditure.

	Dollars
(a) For food, clothes and implements at 2.18 dollars a week for 10 years.	1,136 60
(b) For extras, etc., at 15 dollars a year in 10 years	150 00
(c) Cost of passage money and clothing at the average rate for men and such women as have to pay a part of the passage money, etc.	85 00
(d) Total expenditure	1,371 50
(e) Deficit at the end of 10 years	288 60

77. Let us however examine the matter on the basis of the rates of wages given by the Acting Agent General in the above note, and work out the budget on the lines on which he has proceeded

J. Shovelman.

A. Income per year at 56 cents per day worked for 300 days in a year.	Dollars.
Therefore income in 10 years	168 00
B—Expenditure—	
(a) Food, etc.	1,185 60
(b) For extras and child	150 00
(c) Passage money	98 00
(d) Deduct loss of income owing to illness at 15 days per year for 10 years.	84 00
Total expenditure	1,517 60
C.—Net saving in 10 years	162 40

2. Male Weeder.

A.—Income for 10 years as per note of Acting Agent	1,470 00
B.—Expenditure.—	
(a) Food stuffs, etc.	1,185 00
(b) Extras, etc.	150 00
(c) Passage money	98 00
(d) Loss of income through illness at 15 days per year for 10 years.	73 50
Total expenditure	1,507 10
C.—Net deficit in 10 years	37 10

3. Female Weeder.

A.—Income in ten years at 38 cents per day worked for 300 days per year	Dollars. 1,140.00
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B.—Expenditure.—

(a) Food, etc., as per note	1,086 00
(b) Extras, etc., for ten years 15 dollars per year ..	150.00
(c) Loss of income owing to illness at 15 days per year	57.60

Total Expenditure	1,293.00
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C.—Net deficit in 10 years	153.00
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N. B.—But if she comes within the scope of the ordinance of 1900 she must also, pay her portion of the passage.

	Dollars.
We may roughly put it down at the current rate at ..	72.00
Therefore Total net deficit	225.00

78. We accepted, with regard to the rates of wages as well as the cost of food, clothing and implements, the figures given by the present Agent General as correct for the purposes of the above calculation; and the result, even on this basis, are startling. An able-bodied man going out from India to a far off place at a distance of 12,000 miles, and working as a shovelmnn for seven hours a day during the slack season, and fifteen hours per day during the period of grinding, is able to save after ten years' unremitting toil, not more than a sum of 162 dollars; while a male weeder saves nothing but has a debt of 37 dollars at the end of the period. A female weeder fares even worse. Her budget, prepared on the basis of the above note, actually shows after ten years a deficit of 153 dollars, if she gets a free return passage, or, of 225 dollars when her share of the cost of the passage money is included. Or, to put it differently, among the three, there is a deficit per head after 10 years of 9 dollars, or of 23 dollars, if the female weeder's share of the passage money etc., is included. Further comments on the above is obviously unnecessary.

79. Cost of living as estimated by Mr. Collier.—The above estimated cost of living, as given by the present Acting Immigration Agent General, was assumed to be accurate. On the other hand, the Acting District Immigration Agent, Mr. Collier estimates an average weekly expenditure on food of 234 cents per adult worker as against 185 cents per week for food, according to the Agent General. (vide Appendix VII). While Mr. Collier's estimate allows 8½ lbs. of rice plus 6 lbs. of flour plus 2 lbs. of dholl, or 16½ lbs. in all to an adult; the Agent General considers 2 lbs. and 3 ozs. of bread plus 3½ lbs. of rice plus 1½ lbs. of dholl plus 7 lbs. of flour=14½ lbs. as sufficient. Now, if we reconstruct the three budgets given above on the basis of the Collier estimate by adding another 25.81 dollars per year or about 259 dollars per 10 years to the cost of food, we find that the savings of the shovelmnn disappear, leaving a minus balance of 97 dollars; and that the female weeder's deficit is increased by an additional sum of 254 dollars while the male weeder budget shows an excess of 302 dollars on the deficit side.

80. *Collier Budgets Analysed.*—We are indebted to Mr. Collier for collecting a series of 45 budgets and forwarding them to us through the Acting-General. It may be added that these Budgets sent by Mr. Collier have been collected by or under the supervision of the Managers of the Estates themselves; they are therefore not likely to err on the side of exaggeration. The Appendix No. VIII (1) gives the amounts (exclusive of clothing and implements) spent on food, etc., by these 45 families. The number in the table refers to the serial number of the budget [*vide* Appendix No. VIII (2) from C.1 to C. 45]. We arrive at an average of \$2.95 as representing the cost per week of food etc. (excluding cloth and implements) to a single male labourer by adding up the amounts given in column 2 of the table and dividing the total by 15. The average for a woman is taken as 80 per cent. and that for a child as 40 per cent. of the amount needed for a man. The cost to a male, a female or a child, on the basis of the weekly average of 2.95 dollars for a single man given above, works out as follows :—

(1) Single man	..	..	..	..	2.95 dollars per week.
(2) Single woman	..	..	..	..	2.36 dollars per week.
(3) Child	..	..	..	..	1.18 dollars per week.

The columns (3), (6) and (10) of the table given in Appendix VIII (1) show the difference between the average estimate and the amount actually spent in each case.

81. In Appendix No. VIII(1), are given the budgets of 45 families, comprising 45 men, 30 women and 52 children, or $(15 + \frac{30 \times 80}{100} + \frac{52 \times 40}{100}) = 90$ males. We find that the numbers 3, 16 and 31—35 among single males and No. 37 among men and wives show an excess over the average. The rest have to be content with less than the weekly average of 295 cents. That is to say, out of 100 labourers (male) in British Guiana, 90 are living on insufficient food. The position of single men alone appears to be tolerable, as 7 out of 16 single men in the above table spend on food, etc., more than the average, while even among those single males whose budgets show a deficit, the debit balance is not much except in No. 15 which has a minus balance of 108 cents a week. As regards married couples, there is an average shortage of 154 cents in 14 cases, while one shows an excess of 172. But it is the man with a family—as was only to be expected—whose lot is most to be pitied. These 15 families with 30 adults and 52 children, spend on food, etc., roughly 7,600 cents against the estimated average of over 14,000 cents; it shows that they are actually living on half rations. To sum up, 50 per cent. of the single men have not enough to eat, while the average expenditure in the case of a married couple and a family is below the estimate by 30 per cent. and 45 per cent., respectively. That these figures accurately represent the existing state of things among East Indian immigrants is susceptible of easy demonstration. The average earnings in 1921 of an adult are given by the Immigration Agent General as 36.1 cents per working day, or 217 cents a week as against a weekly expenditure of 234 cents per adult on food, etc., (exclusive of clothing and implements) according to the Collier budget.

82. It will be observed that both the above estimates—Mr. Collier's as well as the Immigration Agent General's—have been drawn up on the assumption that they represented the average cost of living for all classes of workers irrespective of sex. That the Immigration Agent General's estimate is only an average budget is shown by the fact that in his calculations of the amount of savings after 10 years in the case of 3 classes of labourers alike, the cost of food has been shown at an average figure of 1·85 dollars a week, though in the matter of earnings, he treats them as distinct and separate units. It is evidently wrong to adopt two different bases of calculation. We, however, proceed on the assumption that in the matter of food values only, there should be a difference of not more than 20 per cent. in the case of a female worker as against a male worker. So far as "additional" such as tea, milk, kerosine oil, etc., are concerned, there would be no difference; and while in the "male" budget there is provision for tobacco, in the "female" budget hair oil, etc., should also be provided for. Similarly, a woman would use more soap for washing than a male. Therefore, the difference between the two budgets, after allowing for all these discrepancies, may roughly be taken at about 17 per cent. In the case of a child, we should ordinarily adopt an all round average of 40 per cent. of the male budget. The value of the Immigration Agent General's budgets is further vitiated by the fact that he takes on the income-side, the amount of earnings per day worked, and not per working day. The income in one case is nominal, and in the other, real. Both Messrs. Shadwell and Seeborn Rowntree in their studies have taken note of this difference between the nominal and real incomes. The third objection to which the Immigration Agent General's estimate is open, is that while the cost of living relates to 1922, the earnings relate to 1921. (In this connection, we would draw attention to what seems to us an indefensible practice, viz., of making the labourer purchase the implements for work on an estate, thus still further curtailing his already insufficient income).

83. *Estimate of Income.*—The real income of a labourer on a sugar estate, as distinguished from his nominal income, must of course include the extra amount paid to him not in cash but in the form of "benefits". Of these house rent and medical assistance are the most important. But, since no provision for either is made in the budgets to follow, we may omit from the income as well as from the expenditure side.

84. As regards grazings 20,000 heads of cattle and 5,000 sheep and goats are kept by 7,000 labourers, on estates, i. e., about $3\frac{1}{2}$ animals per owner. Since then Government, we understand, charges grazing rent at 10 cents per annum per acre, a charge of \$3·50 per owner would equal a grazing area of 100 acres per animal—an extravagant estimate. For the 7,000 owners we may therefore put down \$25,000 as the total value of their grazing rights.

85. As regards land for growing rice or vegetable, we found that it can be obtained at about \$10 per annum per acre. The estates grant the use of roughly 15,000 acres for rice, and 500 acres for vegetables, to their labourers. The aggregate benefit thus accruing to them under this head may therefore be set down at \$155,000 per annum.

86. Adding to this amount that of the grazing rights (\$25,000), we arrive at a total of \$180,000. Divided by the total number of adult labourers

(42,000) we get an average annual value of these benefits as \$4.28, or a weekly average of under 9 cents per head.

87. As regards fuel, the total requirements per head per week we have budgeted for is 24 cents per week per labourer. Assuming that about one-third of the estates grant free fuel, the total benefit accorded to the labourers as a whole may be put down at one-third too, i.e., 8 cents per week.

88. Thus, the total value of the benefits to be taken into consideration amounts to 17 cents per labourer per week, and we should further note that as some of the rice land is given to non-resident labourer, the proportionate value per resident labourer should be still less.

89. In order to find out the total earnings per week of a worker we shall therefore now add the sum of 17 cents a week to the total amount earned by an adult at the rate of 24 to 30 cents per working day, as estimated by us, for the current year. On this basis, it will be seen that the weekly average per adult works out at \$1.79. Or, to be more accurate, we may take separately the earnings of a shovelman, a male weeder and a female weeder per day actually worked. On page 30 we have given the amounts earned per day worked by the three classes of workers on the *Rose Hall Estate*, which average 38.6 cents for a shovelman, 30.7 cents for a male weeder and 26.2 cents for a female weeder. - On another estate, the name of which has not been mentioned by the Immigration Agent General, we are told that the averages per day actually worked in 1922 are 41 cents for a shovelman, 32 cents for a male weeder and 31 cents for a female weeder. As these rates are higher than those of the *Rose Hall Estate* we shall, to be on the safe side, adopt them in framing our budget. We may here repeat that it is impossible in the present circumstances for a labourer to work for more than five days in the week, as two half days (on Monday and Saturday) are lost in a week on account of the time occupied in allotting tasks and wages. Therefore, a *shovelman* would earn in a week $41 \times 5 = 205$ cents; a *male weeder*, $32 \times 5 = 160$ cents; and a *female weeder*, $31 \times 5 = 155$ cents. Add to these amounts the cash value of the benefits, viz., 17 cents per week and the gross weekly average works out as follows:—

	Per day. Cents.	Per week of* 5 days. Dollars.
1. Shovelman	44.2	2.22
2. Male weeder	35.4	1.77
3. Female weeder	34.4	1.72

These may be taken as representing a liberal estimate for 1922 of the gross average earned by the three classes of labourers now.

* FOOTNOTE.—Compare these rates with those prevalent on different Government works given below:—

For males:—

1. Sugar estates .. 222 cents in a week of 5 days (plus house and medical relief.)
2. Sea Defence Wall 380 cents in a week of 5 days (cash only.)
3. Sea Wall Roads .. 420 dollars in a week of 5 days.
4. Public Works Department yard 540 ditto.

On this basis we find that—

	Dollars.
(a) A Shovelman would earn in 10 years at the rate of 222 cents a week.	1,154.40
(b) A Male weeder would earn in 10 years at the rate of 177 cents a week.	920.40
(c) A Female weeder would earn in 10 years at the rate of 172 cents a week.	891.40

But from these amounts should be deducted the loss of earnings for days, on which a labourer may be unable to work, owing to illness. We assume that the number of such days will not be more than 15 in a year or 150 in ten years. The net average earnings in 10 years, after making the deduction, are noted below:—

	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
1. Shovelman	1,154.40	—66.00	= 1,088.40
2. Male weeder	920.40	—53.10	= 867.30
3. Female weeder	894.40	—51.75	= 842.65

90. *Cost of living.*—As regards the cost of living, we have to consider four different estimates given by different authorities (Appendix No. VII). The Nunan deputation to India prepared, at the desire of Mahatma Gandhi, an estimate of the cost of living to a small farmer or labourer, which amounted to 226 cents a week (exclusive of the cost of clothing, implements, etc.). The Immigration Agent General estimates it at 185, and Mr. Collier at 231 cents a week per adult; while the 15 single men whose budgets have been supplied to us by Mr. Collier himself [vide Appendix No. VIII (2) from 1 to 45] spent on an average 295 cents a week on food, etc. A medical Doctor whom we have consulted, works out the minimum average per week at 288 cents a week for a male. His estimate has been framed on the physiological basis of calculation laid down by Professor Atwater and adopted by Mr. Seebohm Rowntree in his various studies. Two other medical men in British Guiana, who have intimate knowledge of the immigrant labourers, estimated the minimum cost of living at 300 cents a week, but would add another 50 cents, if the labourer is allowed food on a slightly more varied and higher scale than what is necessary in order to maintain him in a state of bare physical fitness. We shall however adopt the figure of 288 cents a week for a male adult in our calculation of the cost of living. The Immigration Agent General's and Mr. Collier's estimates fall short of the minimum laid down by the medical authorities for those who have to do heavy work. The average of 295 cents a week spent by the 15 men of the Collier Budgets would more correctly represent what a labourer actually does spend on food than the estimate of either the Agent General or that of Mr. Collier. Therefore, the weekly cost of food per head may be estimated as follows:—

	Cents.
(a) In the	288
(b) In the	239
(c) In the	115
91. The estimate	295
<i>calculated on 23 c.</i>	

male adult)
male adult)
to an adult male, given by the
low. He does not include in

his estimate boots, shoes or umbrella, etc. Moreover, retail prices of cloth in British Guiana we found to be abnormally high, and clothes would cost more than the amount suggested by him. Similarly, we do not agree with him that a woman would have to spend less on clothes than a man. From what we observed in the colony as elsewhere, we have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that if there is any difference between the two, it would be higher for a woman than a man. To be on the safe side, we should treat them alike, and take 50 cents a week for both. As regards implements, we take the figures given in the estimate of the Immigration Agent General. We should add to the above items of expenditure items under "extras" and passage money, etc. The budgets for different classes on this basis may now be given as follows:—

(A) *Shovelman.*

Expenditure.					Per week.	In 10 years
					Cents.	Dollars.
(a) Food, etc.	..	..	..	..	288	1,497
(b) Clothing	..	..	..	..	50	260
(c) Extras ..	..	..	..	..	11.5	60
(d) Implements	..	..	..	..	10	52
(e) Passage money	..	..	..	..	10	98
Total ..					378 5	1,967

(B) *Male Weeder.*

(a) Same as (A)	378.5	1,967
-----------------	----	----	----	----	-------	-------

(C) *Female Weeder.*

(a) Food, etc.	..	..	..	..	239	1,249
(b) Clothing	..	..	..	..	50	260
(c) Extras ..	..	..	..	..	11.5	60
(d) Implements	..	..	..	..	4	21
Total ..					304.5	1,584

But if in the case of the female weeder we include in her estimate the cost of her share of passage money and clothing, her total would be increased by \$ 72 or, even if a free return passage is allowed to her, she would have to pay only \$ 20 for clothing. Her total would, in one case, be 1,656 dollars; and in the other, \$ 1,604.00 after she had been in the colony for 10 years.

92. We may summarise what has been stated above in a tabular form as below:—

				Income in 10 years. Dollars.	Expenditure in 10 years. Dollars.
1. Shovelman	..	..	..	1,088	1,967
2. Male Weeder	..	..	..	867	1,967
3. Female Weeder	..	..	..	843	1,604

it will be seen that at the current rates, the debit side shows a considerable excess over the credit side and it is clear that the average earnings of a

Shovelman must be raised by 80 per cent., of a male weeder by 120 per cent. and of a female weeder by 88 per cent. a week before they can even make both ends meet. It will further be noticed that if the above increments were to be granted, even then the labourers could not be said to be earning a living wage since after ten years' continuous residence in the colony, they would return to their native land as paupers.

SECTION VII.—MATERIAL AND MORAL CONDITIONS.

I.

93. Of the total number of East Indians in the colony, about 53 per cent. live on the estates; while of the remaining 47 per cent., a considerable number, resident in neighbouring villages, also works for the plantations, when not otherwise engaged. The latter are called the "task-gangs". It may therefore be assumed that about 75 per cent. of East Indians are connected directly or indirectly with the sugar industry. In these circumstances, we shall begin by describing the conditions on the estates, under which immigrants have to live and labour, and then, deal with the position of the community as a whole.

94. *Housing Accommodation.*—The dwellings on an estate are called the "Coolie" lines or ranges. A range is a single-storied building, fifty to hundred feet long, fourteen feet broad, and fifteen feet high from the floor to the apex of the rafters. Its roof is either shingled or covered with corrugated iron-sheets. It has either a mud-floor, or wooden flooring plastered over with earth. Some ranges are raised two feet above the ground level. Each range is divided by thin partitions into five or ten rooms, according to its length. The floor area of a room may roughly be taken as 120 square feet. The partitions between the rooms are usually close-boarded to a height of 10 feet from the floor, the space above that being close-lathed. Each range has a covered verandah, four to six feet wide, running along the whole length on the front side. For ventilation, there is a window on the windward side and a door on the leeward side in every compartment. The distance between two ranges varies from fifty to sixty feet. There are drains both in the front and behind the range; though, being mere channels cut in the soil, they are seldom in a satisfactory condition. One family or three bachelors are required to live in one room. There are, in addition, a number of cottages of improved type on several estates, about ten on each, which were put up in 1919 and 1920. At that time, an attempt was being made to attract labour from Barbados and Grenada; and as they would not have agreed to live in the "Coolie" ranges, better dwellings had to be provided for them. Only a small number of them, however, were built, as the construction of more cottages was soon stopped for various reasons. We found a number of East Indian labourers living in these cottages, as the Black immigrants from the West Indian islands did not stay long in the colony. The responsibility for keeping the "Coolie" yards clean, rests on the occupants. There are no line sweepers. Some of the ranges which we saw were fairly satisfactory, but most of them, such as those on the Plantation *Friends* were found to be in a state of advanced dilapidation. White-washing

seems to be the exception, not the rule, with the result that the ranges present a rather dreary and dismal appearance. Some of the ranges, in our opinion, are hardly fit for habitation, resembling more "a pigstye" in the vivid phrase of a labourer, than a dwelling fit for men; while, as regards married couples, they are absolutely unsuitable. No privacy is possible, when words whispered on one side of the partition may be overheard on the other. In these circumstances, it is not at all surprising to find all decency of a family life destroyed. The "Coolie" lines are as much responsible for the immorality among the immigrants as any other cause. We are therefore sorry to have to record that the authorities in British Guiana do not consider it necessary to provide separate cottages at least for the married couples who are already in the colony; although even bachelors among the new comers are promised accommodation in new cottages. All that Messrs. Andrews and Pearson have written about the "Coolie" lines of Fiji in their report applies with equal force and justice to the "Coolie" ranges of British Guiana. And the least that should be done immediately is to make separate arrangements for the housing of married immigrants.

95. *Drinking Water.*—Arrangements for the supply of drinking water on the sugar estates are pretty much the same as in the villages of the colony, to which a reference has already been made in Section V dealing with Vital Statistics and Public Health. It is therefore unnecessary to go over the same ground again. We are glad to note that in some cases, cisterns have been constructed for storing and purifying water brought in pipes from an outside source; and we wish very much, we had been able to say as much for others also. Although we are assured of the existence of a keen desire among the managers, now as before, to improve the water supply on their estates, we are constrained to add that its improvement should not only be desired, but also effected without any further delay. In order to emphasize the need for promptitude in this direction, we may mention the case of the *Plantation Friends*. The water-pond there is in close proximity to a cemetery, and during the rainy season the danger of contamination is very great. Its Board of Directors have been aware of it for a long time. When it was brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Mr. Brassington, who is the Attorney of the Estate, he said that the company had spent about 7,000 dollars in trying to improve the water supply there: but when the question was further pressed, whether the fact of the cemetery being so near to the pond was known to them, and if known, what had been done to remedy this state of affairs so far, the reply was that they had been aware of it and were desirous of improving the arrangement. There the matter rests. Another estate, that of *Albion*, may also be mentioned in this connection. Wherever we went, the labourers bitterly complained of the impure and dirty water they had to drink.

96. *Medical Arrangements.*—The hospitals on the estates we visited, appeared to be well-equipped and quite ship-shape. As regards medical arrangements in general, we regret to say that the summary of the report of Messrs. McNeill and Chinnai Lal have not been stated:—
The memorandum, Appendix 7, contains the rules relating to the medical treatment of poor persons of estates. It will be seen that certificates entitling persons to treatment either gratis or at reduced fees may be issued by

a number of residents of each locality. Most Government medical officers dispense with certificates and treat Indians free unless they know them to be well off. On settlements at a distance from the residence of a Government Medical Office, Indian settlers sometimes complained that medical aid was not sufficiently accessible. In one locality we found that an allowance had been granted to defray the cost of a motor launch to enable the medical officer to travel up a creek twice a week to an Indian settlement of rice-growers and cattle owners. It seems impossible to send fully qualified medical officers to every locality to which settlers are spreading, but we think that the prevailing conditions render desirable the entertainment of a small staff with qualifications similar to those of sub-assistant surgeons in India. The Indian population in villages and settlements, accustomed to medical treatment on estates, and appreciating its value, needs local and prompt treatment of ordinary ailments. Dispensaries in charge of men of the sub-assistant surgeon class would be very useful if out-door patients received gratuitous treatment and visits to patients' homes in the vicinity of the dispensary, were covered by a very small fee. It is possible that young Indian licentiates of medicine and surgery would be attracted by the offer of salaries of 50 dollars a month, and on resignation after 10 years' service a bonus of one month's pay per year of service. Leave might be given at intervals of four years with arrangements for passage as assisted medical officer on emigrant steamers. Not only Indians but all labourers would benefit by the establishment of dispensaries in populous localities situated at a distance of not more than 6 miles from any existing centre of medical relief. It would also be well to exempt from payment of medical fees persons, whose yearly incomes did not exceed £30. Though certificates of poverty may be obtained more easily than in Trinidad, a general rule of this kind will often obviate the need for obtaining a certificate. The suffering and privation due to sickness amongst the very poor in tropical countries call for the administration of medical relief free from harassing restrictions." (*Vide Report, Part J, page 62, paragraph 16*).

97. If the above proposals had been given effect to a good many of the complaints made to us in this connection would have been removed. We hope, now that the war is over, their recommendations will be carried out at an early date. We may here refer to two points, especially brought to our notice. One was that medical facilities available on the estates were being restricted, owing to the amalgamation of various estates. The case of *Houston* was cited as an instance. The *Houston* Estate used to have its own hospital; but as it has now been taken over by another group, its hospital will be closed, and labourers working on it required to go to the one on the *Diamond* Estate even for out-door medical relief. It is obvious that although the labourers of the *Houston* would not be paid at a higher rate now than before, and, in consequence, would continue to contribute to the same extent towards medical relief in future, the company owning the *Houston* would, by cutting down the hospital, be making additional profits to the extent of the saving thus effected. It is a real grievance, especially in a country where medical relief is not easily available. The second point raised was this. East Indians are anxious that, as they constitute 45% of the total population, the Government should appoint a larger number of Indian doctors, who would be in a better position to

inspire confidence among East Indian patients by reason of their instinctive sympathy with and understanding of the patients' sentiments and requirements. It is obviously unnecessary to amplify this point. If the recommendations of Messrs. McNeill and Chummanlal are carried out, they will go a great way towards removing this grievance.

98. *Rice-beds*.—According to the Report for 1920 of the Immigration Department, the number of immigrants who had rice beds in that year was a little over 17,000 and the total acreage under rice did not exceed 15,000. It will thus be seen that only about 27 per cent of the resident population had rice-beds, and that the average size of a plot per head was even less than one acre. It would appear that bachelors are generally given about $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 acre; and that a family, from 2 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres. But some estates also give rice-beds to non-resident immigrants, in order to induce them to enter into an agreement with the estate to work for four days in a week. For instance, on the *Port Maurant* Estate there were 1,800 acres of rice-beds, of which 1,500 had been given to the residents, and 300 to the non-residents. This would further reduce the number of resident labourers who have rice-beds from 27% to 22%. The rate of rent per acre varies from estate to estate. Of the 57 sugar estates in 1920, 11 estates charged no rent, while 7 from 1 to 4 dollars, and the rest from 5 to 8 dollars a year per acre. The yield of the above 15,000 acres in 1920 was estimated at 255,000 bags of paddy, or nearly 127,000 bags of milled rice. As each bag of milled rice contains on an average about 164 lb, the total yield may be estimated at 20,828,000 lb. This would give an average of 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ bags of rice per head of the immigrants having rice-fields. But it would be unfair to assume that these 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ bags of rice represent the net profits to the labourer. From the detailed figures collected from a large number of labourers, who have rice beds, we find that the average expense on an acre of rice-bed to the immigrant varies from 20 to 30 dollars, if we assume that he or his family work with hired labour. We had these figures tested by some of the biggest as well as the most successful rice-farmers in the colony; and in their opinion, the average expenses (excluding his labour) that have to be incurred by an immigrant per acre of rice would amount to 20 dollars. In addition, he is exposed, though to a far lesser extent than a village farmer, to the inclemencies of the weather. Let us now work out the total profits per head of 17,000 immigrants from 15,000 acres of rice-beds. As stated above, the estimated yield per head may be taken as 7.5 bags or 154 gallons of rice. According to Mr. Collier, the retail price of rice in March 1922 was 20 cents per gallon. On the above basis, 154 gallons would be worth 30.80 dollars. Deduct the amount of 18 dollars as representing the expenditure on 15-17ths of an acre at 20 dollars per acre from the above total of 30.80 dollars; and we find that the net profit per head to the immigrants from the cultivation of rice-beds amounts to 12 dollars and 80 cents only. But then this profit in a good year would be turned into a net loss of 20 dollars in a bad year. Taking, therefore, good and bad years together, we may roughly say that on an average the net profit per head amounts to 9 dollars a year.

99. *Cattle, etc.*—It is stated that in 1920, on those sugar estates for which statistics are available, 6,253 East Indians owned 20,600 head of cattle, and 1,046 owned 5,000 sheep and goats. We could not ascertain how many

of those owning head of cattle were included in the number of the owners of sheep and goats; although we were told that their number would be considerable. On the assumption, however, that the two figures are exclusive of each other, the total number of immigrants owning these animals amounts to 7,300 out of a total resident population of 63,000 on the sugar estates, showing that out of every 25 immigrants, 22 own no animals.

100. The figures relating to rice-beds and live stock on the sugar plantations are most significant. They show that by far the greater majority of immigrant labourers have no other source of income than their weekly earnings on the estates. We have already pointed out that the rate of wages at the present time are miserably low. We have gone at length into the question of rice-beds and live stock; because great emphasis is often laid on these two additional sources of income, from which a majority of them are said to be making a good deal of money. From what we have stated above, it is evident that the percentage of immigrants who have rice-beds to the total resident population working on the estate is only 27, and that of the owners of live stock less than 12. It will further be seen that the net income from rice-beds is not so high, as is generally supposed. But in any case, the income from these two sources should not be included in the amount of earnings on an estate, as it represents the profits of extra labour and capital.

101. *Savings*.—We tried to find out the total amount of savings, if any, of the immigrant labourers on the sugar estates. We regret to say that no information could be had on this point, either from the Post Office Savings Banks or the two banking institutions in the Colony. Nor could we collect any data for arriving at the total amount of indebtedness among them. We are therefore unable to express any opinion on these points. The general impression left on our minds by what we saw and heard was that only a small percentage of workers on the sugar estates, such as drivers, immigrants of superior physique, those who may enjoy certain facilities not open to the majority, are able to lay by anything. Then, there are also a number of those who, by continuously *stinting* and starving themselves are able to save a few cents. But in the case of the vast majority, it may be said that they are just about the poverty lines, some below, and others slightly above, it. The series of the Collier budgets [Appendix VIII (2), C. 1 to C. 45] shows that only 10 per cent. of them were spending on food more than the average of 295 cents a week; and this proportion may be taken as a rough indication of the economic condition of labourers on the estates.

102. *Immorality among immigrant labourers*.—That in the days of indenture, immorality among the indentured labourers was rampant is acknowledged on all hands. Messrs. McNeill and Chimmanlal in their report ascribe it mainly to the sex-disparity and the class of women who were sent out from India. To these two causes should be added another, viz., the "Coolie" lines, already alluded to. Sudden freedom from all the social restraints of a village life, chaotic intermixture of different classes and individuals from various provinces, the conditions of life on an estate, the non-recognition of Indian marriages: all these ten led to lower the moral standard and destroy the sanctity

of married life. And though the indentured system has been abolished, it has left behind an evil legacy. If separate housing arrangements for married couples are immediately made by the provision of a large number of separate cottages; if legal recognition is given to marriages solemnised in accordance with Indian religious ceremonies; and if the State in British Guiana, disregarding all narrow considerations of harm or injury to any particular industry, takes early steps to discharge the obligation laid upon it by law in the matter of imparting education to the children of the Indian community, the progress towards a settled life of a higher moral standard will be considerably hastened.

103. There is not only sexual laxity among the immigrant labourers themselves, but very serious allegations have been made from time to time that managers and overseers have had immoral relations with "coolie" women on the estate. The Sanderson Committee came to the conclusion that there was not much substance in the allegations. From our investigations, we have arrived at the conclusion that there is ground for believing that such immoral relations do exist, though, to what extent, it is impossible to say. East Indians almost unanimously made these allegations; and with equal unanimity and emphasis the planters denied them. The Hon'ble Mr. Webber stated that such immorality did exist, and added that things were pretty much the same, as they were in 1913.

104. It may be mentioned here that there is an Ordinance in the colony, under which a manager or an overseer living with an immigrant woman must either marry her, or leave the estate. It was said that the owners of the sugar estates would not tolerate such an immoral practice and would punish the man, if they were satisfied of his guilt. In spite of all this, the very conditions under which young overseers are required to live on the estates are such that it is impossible to prevent the growth of this evil. Young overseers are either unmarried, or, if married, are not allowed to have their wives on the estate. This seems to be the general practice, though on a few estates a small number of married quarters for overseers have been put up in recent years. Such being the conditions, under which they have to live, it is easy to understand why so often they go wrong. Married men are not generally appointed overseers, because they would be more costly, and, secondly, because the estate would have to incur additional expenditure over the construction of married quarters. These reasons were put forward by one of the sugar magnates of British Guiana who further explained that sugar plantations, being business concerns, have to be run on business lines, and that they had to consider proposals involving additional expenditure, recurring or non-recurring, from that point of view; and he ended by saying that young men would be young men. The subject is a most unsavoury one, and we have no desire to pursue it any further. We should, however, like to place on record our deliberate opinion that the evil does exist, and that the only feasible solution would be to employ married Indian overseers who would be less costly than married overseers imported from Scotland.

105. *Relation between employers and labourers.*—As regards the treatment of labourers by the supervising staff, it appears that things are gradually changing

for the better ; although complaints of ill treatment are even now often heard. We made enquiries into some cases of alleged ill treatment brought to our notice ; and we found most of these complaints to be substantially true. In this matter, as in others, it must be borne in mind that the indentured system has only recently been abolished, and that therefore some time must elapse before occurrences like these can become an exception rather than the rule. The labourer, too, is slowly waking up to the realisation of the fact that he is no longer in bondage but is a freeman who can demand fair and considerate treatment. And add to this another factor that, as there has been a cessation of immigration from India and the consequent stoppage of the supply of fresh labourers, the employers with a limited number of labourers to draw upon are feeling the imperative necessity of treating their employees with more consideration, so as to secure their good will and confidence.

106. *Immigration staff.*—The Immigration Department of British Guiana consists of an Immigration Agent General, a Senior Immigration Agent, four Immigration District Agents and a number of clerks and interpreters. The first six posts of responsibility are held by Europeans. All the interpreters are practically Indians. The officers of the Immigration Department appear to us to be anxious to do as much as they can, under the existing circumstances for the immigrants. But they labour under several obvious disadvantages. The Indian, and, to a certain extent, non-Indian, witnesses are not quite satisfied with the way in which it is being run. The complaint was not against the personnel of the Department, but entirely against the system.

107. The general opinion would seem to be that the Immigration Department, though said to exist for the protection of the emigrants, in reality acts, as if its main function was to protect the planters. Both Dr. Wharton and the Hon'ble Mr. Lukhoo as well as other Indian witnesses deplored the fact that no Indian had ever been appointed to senior posts in the Department, and strongly pressed that one of the precedent conditions to the resumption of immigration from India should be the acceptance of the principle that the Immigration Department shall in future be manned ordinarily by Indians only, so far as the senior appointments are concerned.

II.

108. *Economic Conditions.*—We shall now pass on to a consideration of the material and moral conditions of those Indians who are not connected with the sugar estates.

109. From Appendix IX dealing with the "floating resources" of the East Indians, it will be seen that the total estimated amount under all heads comes up to well over two million dollars or roughly \$18 per head of the total number of East Indians. But if we exclude the number of those living on the estates from the total population, we find that roughly 59,000 people own under various heads these \$2,165,000 or, \$37 per head so far as their floating resources are concerned. It must, however, be added that the above figures cannot be accepted as accurate. For instance the total value of jewelry given above as nearly \$12,000 is a guess, pure and simple, based on no reliable data. Then, again, the figures under various

heads have not been taken for the same year; and any figures compiled in such a haphazard manner are likely to yield quite unreliable results. Take, for instance, the amount brought by repatriated Indians to India. In the table, the figures relate to 1920, while we find that if the amount for 1921 is taken in place of that for 1920, there will be a reduction of roughly \$199,000 from \$250,000 in 1920 to \$51,000 in 1921. Similarly, in the table (7), the total deposits in the Savings Bank Department of the Royal Bank of Canada have been given for the year 1921 instead of 1922, thus inflating the total in (7) by about 37,000 dollars. Again, in the case of the purchasers of land in 1920, it is not stated how much of this land was bought by East Indians from East Indians and how much from others. Then, the figures of the total amount owed by Indians either to the banks or raised by means of mortgage on their properties in 1922 should be ascertained, before any trustworthy conclusions be drawn from these figures. But even on the basis of the above figures, we find that the floating resources do not amount to \$18 per head of the total population. These figures in themselves are enough to show that the East Indians in British Guiana cannot be regarded as being in affluent circumstances.

110. *Comparison between Indians and Chinese.*—A comparison of the economic condition of East Indians with that of the Chinese immigrants in British Guiana will throw further light on this subject. There are in the colony 125,000 East Indians as against 3,000 Chinese; but of the trading licenses issued in 1920, 16,000 were held by East Indians and 2,600 by the Chinese. (*Vide* Appendix X.) Separating from these figures those items which are indicative of comfort or luxury, we find that only a very small proportion of Indians can be said to be living in comfort. The figures bearing on this aspect of the question are given below :—

						East Indians.	Chinese.
(1) Cycles	..	..	..	..	..	981	507
(2) Motor Cars	..	..	..	..	..	99	55
(3) Motor Cycles	..	..	..	..	..	3	10
(4) Motor, 4-wheel, Private		..	..	..	..	3	3
(5) Motor, 2-wheel, Private		..	..	..	..	1	1
(6) Motor, hackney	..	..	..	..	..	21	2
(7) Horses and Mules, Private	..	..	..	..	..	14	2
Total	..	..	..	..	..	1,122	580

111. Thus, it will be seen that although East Indians have got an overwhelming superiority of numbers over the Chinese, being in the proportion of 42 to 1, the order of superiority in the matter of the ownership of cycles motor cars, etc., is reversed, as while 19 per cent. amongst the Chinese hold these licenses the number of licensees amongst Indians is less than 1 per cent. These figures show that Indians, as compared with the Chinese, are occupying a very low position in the economic life of the Colony. That the European leads is obvious enough; but that the Indian whose thrift and industry as well as initiative and enterprise have become proverbial in the colony, should not be even as well off as the Chinaman, is due entirely to the fact that the Chinaman,

long ago, came to realise that so long as they were tied down to the sugar estates, it was hopeless for them to aspire to a position of economic independence. While the Indians were working for the benefit of others under the indenture system, the profits earned by the Chinese remained in their own pockets. This conclusion is further confirmed, if we refer to the amounts deposited in the Savings Banks or invested in lands.

112. Let us first take the Post Office Savings Bank. We find that in 1920, there were 8,716 East Indian depositors, who had \$795,000 as against 596 Chinese depositors with £87,500 in the Post Office Savings Bank account. While only 7 per cent. of the total East Indian population had in 1920 deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank, the number among the Chinese was 20 per cent. If we take the number of depositors and the amounts deposited by the two classes respectively, we find that in the case of East Indian depositors, the amount per head was \$91 as against \$147 per head for the Chinese. So far as only the Post Office Savings Banks are concerned, it is interesting to note that in 1870, there were 1,800 East Indian depositors with \$138,000 to their credit, or \$77 per head. The Royal Commission of 1871 commented on these figures as follows:—“(It) seems to show that the stratum of small depositors for whom specially Savings Bank is intended, has been as yet hardly reached.” We think that their remarks are just as true now as they were in 1871. It is true that since then 2 more Banks have been opened in British Guiana, which attract a number of depositors who would have otherwise gone to the Savings Bank. The amounts deposited by the East Indians in these two banks have already been stated above; but it is safe to assume that the number of depositors—the exact numbers of whom the managers declined to communicate to us—would be proportionately the same, as in case of Savings Banks.

113. Turning now to the amounts invested in land by Indians and the Chinese in 1920 respectively, we find that 852 East Indians purchased land valued at \$380,000 as against 71 Chinese who invested nearly \$152,000. The average amounts per purchaser are \$447 for East Indians and \$2,270 for the Chinese. Further, 428 East Indians owned in the towns of George Town and New Amsterdam property worth \$640,000 as against 97 Chinese whose property were valued at about \$258,000 giving an average of \$1,490 and 2,560 per owner for the Indians and the Chinese, respectively. We were informed by the Immigration Agent General that in March 1922, there were not more than 52 East Indians owning real property of any kind, worth \$10,000 and more. It shows that out of roughly 239,000 East Indians who have been introduced in the Colony during the last 85 years, only 52 East Indians have been able to acquire property worth \$10,000 and over, in this long, long period. These figures conclusively show that although both the East Indians and the Chinese were taken to British Guiana as immigrants to work on the sugar estates, the latter have succeeded in improving their economic condition to a far greater extent than the former, simply because they are free and in no way dependent on the sugar plantations for their living, unlike 75 per cent. of the Indian immigrants.

114. *Some instances of successful Indians.*—A small number of East Indians seem to have succeeded very well indeed, notwithstanding the most unfavour-

able circumstances, under which they had to labour. Pandit Risal Maharaj, who, as a young lad of 16 years, emigrated from India, has succeeded in building up a position, as a merchant, which does great credit to his integrity and enterprise. Similarly, Mir Abdul Rahman Sahib, another indentured immigrant, is the owner of a large area of land and has, besides, some shops. Both these gentlemen belong to the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the one having gone from Gorakhpore, and the other from Allahabad. In Berbice, there are two other most successful East Indians, Mr. Sheo Tahl, and Thakoor Ram Singh. Both of them are engaged in cattle-farming on a very large scale. The Luckoo brothers are another instance in point. The elder Mr. Luckoo is a successful solicitor at New Amsterdam, who was for one term Mayor of that town. His younger brother, Mr. J. Luckoo, is a leading barrister, and enjoys the distinction of being the only East Indian to have sat in any of the Courts of Policy. Among medical men, Mr. Wharton is acknowledged on all hands to be a most successful physician. But it is Mr. Jagadev of Mahaicony, who represents the high water mark of Indian enterprise in British Guiana. Born on a sugar estate, of parents who were indentured immigrants, and with no educational advantages to boast of, he is the first man in the Colony to have successfully utilised mechanical appliances for agricultural purposes. The machines which an American Company failed to make use of, were purchased by him, and are now being used on his rice farms, after having undergone the necessary alterations to suit the local conditions. These alterations were made by Mr. Jagadev himself, his only qualification for work of this kind being that he is quite innocent of all knowledge of engineering. He owns over 4,000 acres of rice-fields, and has constructed at his own expense a canal of 4 miles in length to irrigate them.

115. On a smaller scale, there are several others, who have made good in different walks of life. It would seem that an Indian in British Guiana finds full scope for his enterprise and initiative, only when he leaves the estate. In some of the villages visited by us, we saw a number of small farmers, well-to-do and contented, though they were bitterly complaining of the apathy shown by the authorities towards them. For instance, in spite of repeated representations, no road has been constructed from the Mora Point to the main road, with the consequence that a very large number of East Indian farmers living on the Mahaicony Creek have to come down to Mahaicony in a boat. The residents of Skeldon are, for want of a road, similarly cut off from all communication with important centres of life.

116. *Savings of the Repatriated.*—At this stage, reference may be made to the amounts either remitted, or personally brought, to India by the immigrants. It is very often assumed that these amounts represent savings out of the earnings made by the immigrants working on the sugar estates. That it is not so, and cannot be so, in the case of the vast majority of immigrants is evident from what we have stated in the Section on "Work and Wages." From a despatch addressed by the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India, No. 41 of 1915, we learn that out of 531 repatriates from British Guiana in 1914, only 463 had brought any savings with them, while the number of those who had with them sums over Rs. 150 was only 241. These figures do not include the value of jewelry brought back, "which"

say the Government of India in their despatch, "is presumably estimated, and somewhat doubtful." We have got the testimony on this point of another independent witness, Mr. Mahadev Parilday, who has accompanied to India the returning immigrants of British Guiana and Trinidad, more than 25 times, in the capacity of either a third compounder (medical officer) or a senior compounder on board the return ship. He said that in the last boat from Trinidad to India, there were 900 repatriates in all, of whom about 400 were "without any money at all". "The few who had a few thousand dollars with them were generally *Pandits* (Priests) who did not labour", said he, and added that "the labourers save very little." Further light on this point is thrown by the Royal Commission of 1871. They say in their report as follows:—

"854. *Money remitted to India by Coolies returning.*—In the general reports of the Immigration Commissioners there has annually appeared a return of money remitted through Government agency to India on behalf of immigrants claiming a free passage. From papers submitted by the Immigration Agent General, containing full details, we gather that in twelve ships which sailed with returning Indian Immigrants, between the 15th November 1834, and the 11th November 1859, 2,828 immigrants took away with them money acquired in the colony to the amount of 453,369·70 dollars, or £94,452 Os. 5*d*. The whole number who have returned is 6,281; but the money of those who went by 5 ships out of twenty was not officially remitted, and cannot now be ascertained. The Return of the Emigration Commissioners for 1870, which includes some times estimated, rather than ascertained, figures, gives a total of £116,473 17*s*. 7*d*. It seems of little use to calculate averages in this connection, or to guess at the amount of cash and value of jewelry on their persons, which the immigrants very carefully conceal. The number of those who go back is but a small fraction of those who come, and no attempt has hitherto been made to discover whether the method by which the well-to-do among them have made their money was one equally open to the majority of their compatriots.

"855. *Return passengers per Ganges inspected.*—To the above estimate must be added 421 passengers who embarked by the Ganges on the 10th September 1870, carrying with them, through official channel the sum of 47,438·95 dollars. This convoy we had an opportunity of inspecting before they set sail. There was one man aged 39, with his wife, and three children all born in the colony, who took back 1,100 dollars of his own, and 200 dollars in the name of his wife. Another with wife and children, took 7,000 dollars. It seems to be the fathers of families who had thriven best; but we did not succeed in finding any one who had made a large sum of money without having been aided to his wealth by trade, and having lived for some time in the colony as a free labourer. In particular, we noticed each

of the two families above mentioned, as having come from Berbice where they had been engaged in cattle-farming. A third, returning with his wife and with the reputation of being rich, took with him officially 808 dollars. He, however, had come out but 18 months before, was paying his own passage back, and had made his money in the interval by begging, in the character of a Brahmin".

117. Very few of the "repatriates" to India from British Guiana returned immediately on the expiry of their period of service on the estates. We made enquiries on this point, and were told that an immigrant who had come all the way from India to British Guiana would not care ordinarily to go back empty-handed to India, after having come all the way to British Guiana. It is only the "stony-broke" among immigrants, that are anxious to get away as early as they can. On the other hand, those who are physically fit take to rice-farming, shop-keeping, etc., and continue working for another period of 5 to 25 or 30 years before they would think of returning. Most of the savings are therefore brought by such men. In these circumstances, it is quite erroneous to suppose, as is only too often done, that the amounts remitted or brought to India by " " " " in any way the savings made by them while working. It may be stated here that the total number of repatriates from British Guiana from 1919 to 1921 was, in round figures, 3,800, and the amount brought back by them \$377,000 or \$100 per head. This 100 dollars per head may be taken as representing that savings on an average of 15 years.

III

118. *Criminal Statistics.*—As regards the criminal statistics, we regret to say that we could not get the figures, relating to the total number of cases for various offences decided by all the courts of the colony, or the number of Indians tried or sentenced. We give below the figures relating to the cases tried by the higher courts only.—

Year	TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES OF ALL RACES.		NUMBER OF CASES IN WHICH EAST INDIANS WERE IMPLICATED.		Col. 3 as compared with Col 1 in %.
	Reported.	Convicted.	Reported	Convicted	
	1	2	3	4	
1917	81	63	40	33	49.4
1918	69	62	16	10	23.2
1919	136	88	49	35	36.0
1920	83	67	37	27	44.0

In 1920, 7 East Indians were convicted of murder ; which show the very high rate of 56 murders per lae of population as against 5 and $5\frac{1}{2}$ per lae in Madras and the United Provinces, respectively ; but from the summary of cases appended to the Report of the Immigration Department, it is impossible to draw any inferences of a general character. The figures relating to the number of convicts for the years 1917, 1918, 1919 and 1920 are given below :—

Year.				All classes.	East Indians.	Per cent. of East Indians as compared with all classes.
31st December 1917	..	..	..	427	152	35·6
Ditto.	1918	..	..	331	144	43·5
Ditto.	1919	..	..	458	140	30·6
Ditto.	1920	..	..	572	149	26·0
Average				447	146	31·4

These figures appear to be satisfactory when they are compared with the number of the Indians in the colony (45 per cent.).

119. *Alms House*.—The total number of inmates in the Alms House in various years is as follows :—

Year.			Monthly average of all classes.	Monthly average of Indian immigrants.	Percentage of Indian immigrants.
1914 to 1918	..	..	756	148	19·6
1919	..	..	749	217	28·9
1920	..	..	764	298	31·1
1921	..	..	719	211	29·6

The above figures, as regards the East Indians, would have been higher but for the fact, as pointed out by the Secretary to the Poor Law Commissioners, that " batches of that race have been repatriated from time to time ". We find that in three years, 1919 to 1921, 571 were repatriated as paupers from British Guiana. If they had all remained in British Guiana, the number in 1921 would not have been 211, but somewhere in the neighbourhood of 800. But apart from these officially declared paupers, there are a very large number of broken down Indians, known as " Jobbers ", whom

one comes across mainly in the streets of George Town. We have seldom seen a more pathetic sight than the one presented by them. One missionary who had also worked for some years in India spoke most feelingly about their wretched condition, and deplored very much that there was no institution like a *Dharmshala*, to which these people could go and rest during the night, instead of being driven to seek shelter under bridges and by the road-sides. Here it may be appropriately mentioned that the President and Mr. Tivary were very much impressed with the three or four rest-houses established and maintained at George Town by Major Alexander (Garib Das) of the Salvation Army, where people who earn something can get food and shelter at cheap rates.

120. *Lepers*.—The number of lepers belonging to all races as well as the East Indian community are given below from 1914 to 1921 :—

Year.				Monthly average of lepers of all races	East Indians only.	Percentage.
1914 to 1918	..	..	..	318	120	38
1919	..	..	..	260	101	39
1920	..	..	..	267	101	38
1921	..	..	..	248	82	33

The fall in the percentage of East Indians in 1921, as compared with other years, is due to the fact that a number of those cases which were not very serious were sent away from British Guiana to India in the immigrant ships.

121. *Lunatics*.—There were in March 1922, 642 lunatics in the Lunatic Asylum, consisting of 372 males and 270 females. They were classified as under :—

(1) East Indians	..	..	..	..	..	250
(2) Portuguese	..	..	..	..	..	15
(3) Chinese	..	..	..	..	..	4
(4) Blacks	..	..	..	..	..	301
(5) Europeans	..	..	..	..	..	2
(6) Mixed Race	..	..	..	..	..	61
(7) Others	..	..	..	..	..	9

These figures show that East Indians constitute 39 per cent. of the total population of the Lunatic Asylum.

IV.

122. *Administration of Intestate estates*.—The administration of intestate estates may be referred to here. We find that the total number of such estates was 998 during the period, 1917-1920. The property during this period was

valued at roughly \$30,000 of which \$6,500 were paid to heirs residing in the colony or in India. A considerable portion of the balance was escheated to the State; as under the law of the colony, most of the marriages celebrated according to Hindu or Muhammadan customs are not recognised as lawful, and the issues of such marriages are regarded as bastards. It may be added that such an issue may apply to His Excellency the Governor to waive the rights of the State in his favour. Several persons have done so. We asked for the total amount under this head from the beginning of immigration down to 1922; but the necessary figures have not been received by us. A very large amount has however been escheated owing to the existence of such a law. If an additional argument were needed to justify the unconditional recognition of such marriages, it is to be found in these figures. That the hard earned money of poor immigrants should be taken over by the State, while their children, legitimate, or illegitimate, should go a-begging, is a glaring injustice which calls for immediate redress. The figures for the four years are given below:—

V.

	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.
1. Number of estates dealt with ..	149	261	340	248
2. Amount realised	Dollars. 7,594	Dollars. 5,302	Dollars. 7,904	Dollars. 9,143
3. Amount paid to heirs in the colony ..	321	900	2,573	1,554
4. Amount paid to heirs in India ..	346	302	366	325

123. *Racial inferiority*.—We are glad to say that we found no traces of that racial feeling which exists in a very acute form in certain British Colonies. The law of the land makes no distinction, at any rate in theory, between one race and another. Indians can anywhere acquire property or carry on business without let or hindrance. Similarly, there is no problem of "segregation". In George Town, for example, Indians live side by side with other races; and as far as we are aware, nobody has ever taken any objection to their doing so. East Indians are allowed to use tram-cars and railway trams on exactly the same terms as members of other communities. But, we feel bound to say, that although in theory, and to a certain extent in practice, no disabilities have so far been imposed upon East Indians on merely racial grounds, there does exist considerable race-prejudice. The East Indian is considered to be of a very inferior race and an Indian has been described in official documents as of the "Cooly race". Every East Indian, high or low, rich or poor, is a cooly. This contempt against East Indians is partly racial and partly economic, and is the direct outcome of the conditions under which East Indians used to be taken from India and made to work during the continuance of the indentured system. It is further to be regretted that the

manager and the authorities responsible for the social and moral well-being of immigrant labourers, have, barring exceptional cases here and there, cared more for pound, shilling and pence, than for the good of their dependents, practically voiceless and helpless employees. We asked Mr. Lukhoo in the course of his evidence whether the following statement made by the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council in their letter addressed to Sir George Barnes, the then Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1917, was true of British Guiana or not:—"It is known fact that the general body of Europeans in the colonies consider Asiatics as racially and fundamentally inferior to them. When therefore such men obtained privileged control over Asiatics, the position of the latter is reduced to that of mere cattle, and even the most humane planter does not succeed in lifting his Asiatic employee in the social and moral scale. So long as such a view continues to be entertained by the European planters, no Indian who has any regard for the moral well-being of his fellow men can possibly contemplate with equanimity a continuation of such a system of service however modified and whatever may be the safeguards devised for the protection of the servant". Mr. Lukhoo stated, "Of course, 'cattle' is a strong word to use but that is exactly what is thought of Indians here". He added that Indians were considered to be inferior in intelligence to others, including the Negroes. In confirmation of this fact, it may be stated that on the sugar estates, rarely has an Indian, if any, been appointed to the post of an overseer the reason given for this being, as stated by one of the sugar magnates that Indians could not be trusted in money matters; although on some of his own estates white overseers have been guilty on more than one occasion of misappropriation of estate funds. As was admitted by Mr. Sherlock, who gave evidence before us on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, the sugar planters went to Scotland for overseers but came to India for labourers. It may be incidentally mentioned that in Scotland they do not grow sugarcane, while in India they do. The members belonging to races other than the East Indian, are appointed to these positions but not Indians. Similarly, in the various Government departments there are over 388 posts carrying an annual salary of £150 and over. Only twenty-three out of which are held by Indians; but of these twenty-three appointments, 12 are held by the interpreters in the In the Police, the Judicial or Executive line, there i Department there are one permanent and two temporary posts held by East Indians. In the Educational Department which looks after a population, 45 per cent of whom are East Indians, there is not a single East Indian in the higher grades. Even in the Immigration Department which has to deal almost exclusively with East Indian immigrants, not one Indian has ever been appointed as District Agent, let alone the highest posts. The prevailing idea has been that the East Indian is fit to serve only as a labourer and nothing more. One of the ex-Governors of the British Guiana publicly stated that because East Indians were uneducated, they were such good labourers. The prospect of remaining a labourer not only for himself, but also for his children and his children's children seems to be, in the opinion of some persons, the utmost that an immigrant might aspire to. He has merely been looked upon as an efficient machine for labour. As one of the labourers has stated in written statement submitted to us, "we have been treated like horses and are made to live in

ranges, no better than stables ; but while there is a groom to look after the horse there is none to care for us ”.

124. Let us mention another small fact as showing that the Indians do not count for anything else except as labourers. On the Board of the Poor Law Commissioners, there is not one single Indian although it manages the Alms House besides discharging other functions. This point was prominently brought to our notice, by both Hindu and Muhammadan gentlemen that although Hindus and Muhammadans pay taxes just as other communities did, even in such a small matter, as the Board of Poor Law Commissioners, there was not one Indian ; and yet they added, the number of Indian inmates in that institution was not inconsiderable. When we visited the Alms House we were surprised to note that the vegetarian diet meant for Indian inmates, and described in the printed schedule as the “cooly diet”, was less than the ordinary diet. We have no doubt that, had an Indian been on the Board of the Poor Law Commissioners, this could never have been allowed for such a long time. The Hon'ble Mr. Luekhoo thought that the number of Indians in public services should be in proportion to their numerical strength ; and added that, unless this principle was recognised, a considerable doubt should remain in their minds as to whether their claims would ever meet with due recognition. We would close the subject after referring to two incidents. During the war when there was a shortage of medical men and a number of posts in the Medical Department were vacant, the Surgeon-General of British Guiana advertised the posts in America, although American Degrees are not recognised within the British Empire. Dr. Wharton, who was a member of the Medical Board, suggested that instead of getting doctors from America, they might get qualified men from India. Nothing came out of this proposal. Secondly, the Honourable Mr. Webber stated that although there was no statutory bar to the appointment of any qualified man, irrespective of race or creed, to the posts of Inspectors of Police, only Europeans were appointed because it was felt that they alone possessed the necessary social status.

125. *Religion*.—We note that Indians are allowed liberty in the practice of their religious beliefs and worships, except in regard to two points to which we shall refer later on. We visited a certain number of the mosques and temples on the sugar estates, which had been built by the contributions raised by the immigrants themselves and liberal donations by the State authorities. But Hindus are not allowed to cremate their dead, and similarly the marriages celebrated according to Hindu or Muhammadan customs are not regarded as lawful. With regard to the first point, it would be difficult to give a more glaring instance in support of our statement that the Immigration Department was lacking in sympathetic understanding of Indian sentiment and feeling, than the statement made to us by the immigration authorities, that Hindus did not desire to cremate their dead. That they are quite ignorant of the strength of Indian sentiment on this point is borne out by the fact, that no less a man than Dr. Wharton, an Indian Christian, wanted to cremate the body of his father (Hindu) who had left instructions that after his death, his body was to be cremated ; and had applied for permission which was declined on the ground that he could not do so under the law. Where Dr. Wharton failed, it is not at all surprising that hundreds

and thousands of immigrants should have failed to impress the authorities with the strength of their sentiment in this matter. On the return of the British Guiana Deputation from India in 1920, Mr. Thomas Greenwood who represented the West India Committee on that deputation, submitted a report to the Government of British Guiana, in which he recommended that "Religious Observances—in particular the right to burn the dead on the sea-shore—should be treated with every consideration and respect" (The italics are ours.) This was in 1920; and nothing has so far been done to remove this disability simply because the immigration authorities are under the impression that Hindus do not want it. Could there be, we wonder, a more flagrant instance of direct interference with the religious observances of the Hindu community although Hindus constitute 32 per cent. of the total population of British Guiana?

126. *Marriage Law*.—Similarly in the matter of Indian marriages, the Immigration Agent General defends the existing law affecting the validity of what are described as Asiatic marriages on the ground that a certain Christian Missionary also agrees with him. In the opinion of the latter gentleman, the unconditional recognition of Indian marriages would have disastrous consequences, because the parties who might change their minds afterwards and separate from one another, would be thereby prevented from so doing. He, evidently, does not realise that his argument, if correct, applies with equal force to the marriages celebrated according to the Christian religion. The only proper course to be adopted in a matter like this should be to consult the leading members of the Hindu and Muslim community and be guided by their advice rather than rely on people professing a different religion, however sincere and well-meaning they may be. As we have dealt with this question of marriage at length in a separate section, it is not necessary to discuss it here.

VI.

127. *Other Grievances*.—Of the grievances under which the East Indian community in British Guiana is labouring, and which were brought to our notice, the most serious ones are those relating to (1) education, (2) political status, (3) marriage and (4) repatriation. We shall deal with them in the next section of our report. There are, however, several points, to which a passing reference may be made here.

128. Under the Masters and Servants Ordinance of 1853, labourers are still prosecuted and fined. In case they cannot pay fines, they were sent to jail. We asked the representatives of the British Guiana Sugar Planters' Association, who expressed themselves in favour of its being revised so as to bring it into harmony with present-day requirements. We are of opinion that it should be revised.

129. Two Indian festivals are celebrated in British Guiana—the Moharram and the Holi. But there is no holiday on either of these occasions, either in public offices or in sugar estates. A large number of labourers complained to us about it, and we think that it would involve no inconvenience to any one, if these two festivals are declared public holidays. It is one of those things which should have been conceded long ago.

130. Children under 12 years should not be made to work in "Creole gangs" by the estate authorities. The Planters' Association are in principle favourable to the stoppage of child labour. Immigrant labourers considered it a real hardship that their children should be indirectly compelled to work in these gangs. We feel that if only the existing provisions of the Education Ordinance are properly enforced and the offending parties prosecuted, this practice will speedily come to an end.

131. The practice of getting agreements signed by labourers in an objectionable form seems to be prevalent on some estates. The Planters' Association, we are glad to note, is opposed to this practice; and we hope that it will soon cease.

132. Women, when engaged on cane-picking in trenches, have to stand in water up to their knees and, at times, even above their waists. It is really a most objectionable practice which should immediately be put a stop to.

133. There is no Labour Bureau or Arbitration Board to decide the disputes between labourers and managers regarding the rates of wages and hours of work. Consequently, labourers have to go on suffering until it becomes unbearable, when they go on strike, which may lead to friction and at times even to bloodshed. The planters' case is that on a difference between a manager and labourers arising on this point, the immigration authorities always intervene, and that they do so with effect, and further, that the manager of a neighbouring estate is also sometimes requested to arbitrate. In either case, the labourers do not regard the award as an impartial one. An independent arbitrator or a body of arbitrators will be in a better position to judge between the claims of the two parties; and their decision will inspire far greater confidence among the labourers.

134. There have been cases in which men have been penalised for taking a prominent part in strikes caused by the disputes regarding the rates of wages. The cases of 5 such men were particularly brought to our notice; and we found that the complaint was not altogether baseless. We are hopeful that in view of the definite assurance publicly given by the Planters' Association, such men in future will not be penalised.

135. One of the most important points raised in the course of our enquiry relates to the appointment of an officer in the West Indies by the Government of India, to look after the affairs of the immigrant Indian population in British Guiana and the British West Indies. So long ago as 1875, the late Marquess of Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, addressed to the Government of India a despatch in which he suggested that the Colonial Governments should agree to receive and pay for a sufficient number of qualified agents to be appointed by the Government of India, from its own servants, who should be stationed at suitable places in the colonies. They were to have the fullest opportunities of ascertaining the condition of the emigrants and of bringing to the immediate notice of the Colonial authorities everything which might in their judgment afford a reasonable ground of complaint, furnishing at the same time to the Indian Government full reports of the condition of the Indians

resident in the colony. The Government of India sent a reply to this despatch in 1877, in the course of which they made the following observations on the above proposal :—

“ It would, perhaps, be desirable to have in each Colony an officer appointed by the Indian Government—but paid for by the Colony—to look after the affairs of the immigrants on our behalf in the manner proposed; but we apprehend that the salary necessary to secure a properly qualified official for so responsible a post (the functions of which might be in many cases extremely disagreeable and calling for much tact and decision) would not be small and would add considerably to the present cost of emigration, of which the Colonies are already inclined to complain. In all but the larger Colonies, the cost of such an appointment would probably be prohibitory. We are disposed to think that the requirements of the case would be sufficiently, and in some respects better, met by the periodical deputation from India of an officer acquainted with the business of emigration to visit the several Colonies which receive Indian emigrants, both British and foreign. The report of such an officer would, in our opinion, sufficiently supplement the sources of information already at our disposal, and the cost of his deputation, which would only be occasional charge, might be debited to the revenues of India.” (*Vide* the Report of the Sanderson Committee, page 11, paragraph 38.)

After this reply from the Indian Government, the proposal was dropped; and nothing seems to have been done in this direction for a long time. The Government of India, however, deputed in the early nineties Dr. Cumins, and in 1913-14, Messrs. McNeill and Chinnunlal to visit the various colonies which were engaged in recruiting Indian emigrants under indenture. When the Numan-Luckhoo deputation from British Guiana came to India in 1919-20, they once again put forward the Salisbury proposal with reference to their colony, and expressed on behalf of their Government their willingness to pay the expenses of such an officer from India. The latest scheme placed before us for consideration by the British Guiana Government also contemplates the appointment of such an official. The Indian witnesses in British Guiana strongly pressed on us the desirability of this proposal being adopted at an early date. The Honorable Mr. Luckhoo speaking on behalf of the Indian community, laid great emphasis on it, and urged that if the proposal should prove acceptable to the Government of India, he would like to suggest that this officer should be an Indian. Indians in the colony were unanimously of opinion that an Indian from India alone should be appointed. We note that under the latest Indian Emigration Act, the Governor-General in Council is empowered to make such appointments. The officer should not only be appointed by the Government of India, but his expenses, in our opinion, should be a charge on Indian revenues. He should be entrusted with the duty of looking after the interests of Indians in British Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad. We recommend the appointment of such an officer at an early date; it would not only enable the Government of India to keep in constant

touch with their nationals in those far-off places, but also facilitate considerably an early solution of the many outstanding problems in those colonies.

SECTION VIII.—EDUCATION.

131. British Guiana had, in 1920, 224 aided elementary schools imparting instruction to 35,000 pupils, of whom about 8,500 or 24 per cent. of the total number on rolls were East Indians. (*Vide* Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1920.) The State gives special grant-in-aid to those schools that teach an Indian vernacular to East Indian pupils; and many schools are taking advantage of this offer. It is interesting to note that an Ordinance was passed as early as 1876, making elementary education compulsory in the Colony for children between the ages of 5 and 12 years and living within the radius of two miles from a school; but the number of schools even at the present time is insufficient to accommodate more than 50 per cent. of the children of the compulsory school age. Under another Ordinance (1919), the employment during school-hours of children under 12 years, is an offence punishable with fine. (*Vide* appendix XI). The number of children of compulsory school age, is given in the last Census Report of 1921 as 49,000; and on the same basis, the number of such children of East Indian parentage works out, in round figures, at 19,000, of whom less than 50 per cent. are receiving instruction of some sort; and, in the case of the Black and coloured races, at 23,500, all of whom are practically at school.

137. *Causes of illiteracy among East Indians.*—Out of every 19 children belonging to this community, who must receive, under the law, instruction for seven years, 11 children are permitted by the State to grow up in illiteracy; while almost every Negro or Coloured child is found to be at school. Two reasons are usually assigned for this state of educational backwardness of the community. The first reason is that the Indian parent, being illiterate himself, does not realize the benefits of literacy, and, therefore, prefers his child's working in a creole gang on the sugar estate to his or her going to school. And, secondly, as the estate authorities are anxious to have child-labour for their creole gangs, no serious notice is taken of this breach of the law on the part of the East Indian parents. That the Indian, who is himself illiterate, should dislike the idea of sending his child to school is true, just as illiterate parents all the world over have generally been, or are, opposed to the education of their off spring. But there is another aspect to this question. Several labourers told us, when asked about it, that as "book nectar does not satisfy the cravings of a hungry stomach," they are compelled by their poverty to send their children of tender age to earn on an estate rather than learn at school. Therefore, while it is possible to sympathise with the parents' point of view, it is really difficult to appreciate the apathetic attitude taken up by the authorities in a matter of such serious importance. In this connection, it may be mentioned that although the employment during school hours of a child of school-going age renders his employer liable to punishment, practically no notice seems to have been taken of such breaches of the law by the estates.

138. *What East Indians in British Guiana say.*—The following observations of a well informed and responsible publicist, who is himself an East Indian,

may be taken as embodying, what the educated section of his community thinks of the attitude of the authorities on this important question :—

“ The moral welfare of the labourer hardly counted in the policy of the employer. He was generally regarded as a machine capable of exerting only so much man-power for certain ends. With him it was only work, work,—work like the woman in Hood’s ‘ Song of the Shirt,—till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed as well as the weary hand.’ Legal regulations for ensuring his general well-being certainly existed, but the machinery responsible for their due observance was miserably inadequate and unsatisfactory. The educational interests of his children received but scant attention, so scant indeed as to have implied culpability in a high degree on the part of our educational authorities. What must we think of a so-called paternal Government, which tolerates, if not actually encourages, a state of affairs in which we find that out of some 20,000 children of Indian parentage, who should be attending school, only about 6,000 do so, and this despite the presence in the Education Ordinance of the compulsory attendance clause? The only reasonable explanation for this is that the Government does not wish to see a literate Indian population; or it may be that in the interest of a certain class of employers of labour it recognizes the expediency of keeping these people at such a mental standard as to make them practically incapable of extending their outlook, beyond the field of agricultural labour. Even at the present moment, many of us are painfully aware of an atrociously iniquitous movement on foot to conserve and utilise the Indian child life of the Colony, for labour purposes on sugar plantations; and a supine and conniving Government is supposed to be looking on quite complacently.” (*Vide* Mr. J. Rohoman’s article on “ The Creole of East India ” published in the Progress No. of the “ *Tinker* ” of British Guiana, page 103).

139. *Schools, undenominational.*—Another noticeable feature of the educational system is that it is practically under the management and control of Christian Missionaries. There are no schools run by Government; and though there is a conscience clause in the Educational Code, it is so worded that Hindu and Mohamadan children have necessarily to receive religious instruction according to the Christian faith. The fact that education in the colony is in the hands of the Christian Missionaries, appears to have had its origin in the belief that thereby the conversion to Christianity of the Asiatic Immigrants—Indian as well as Chinese—would be accelerated. The Royal Commission of 1871, after showing that very few converts were being made, and pointing out that there was no hope of a wave of Christianity flowing backwards to Asia from the colony, stated, “ it is well that this (i.e., the unlikelihood of making converts to Christianity from among the Hindus and Chinese races) should be acknowledged; because so long as it is fashionable to believe the contrary, the idea operates to prevent the State from assisting and prompting the work which is really open to it.” (*Vide* the report of the Royal Commission of

1871, page 191, paragraph 899.) Although this note of warning was sounded so far back as the year 1871, we regret to find that the missionary still continues to monopolise a field which should have been left, as suggested by the said Commission, to the school-master. And the consequences of persistence in this mistaken policy have been most disastrous, so far as the education of the Indian children is concerned. A number of parents, we were informed, would let their children grow up in ignorance rather than run the risk of their being converted as a result of attending mission schools. In these circumstances, it would seem to be only just and fair for the State itself to run schools on undenominational lines, so that in the matter of education at any rate Indian children should enjoy equal facilities—not in theory only as in the past, but also in practice—along with the children of other communities. This proposal, if adopted, would not impose any additional financial burden on Government, as at the present time all current expenses of the aided institutions are paid out of the general revenues.

140. *Instruction poor in quality and Schools unclean.*—We visited a number of schools in different parts of the country and two things specially struck us in what we saw. First, the quality of instruction seemed to be very poor; and secondly, most of the schools were very unclean. We give below two extracts from the two reports by Dr. Rose, who was in charge of the medical inspection of schools in the city of George Town and on the East Coast Demerara from 1917 to 1920. He examined in all over 1,000 children from 23 schools. His reports are valuable, and reveal a deplorable state of things. In the course of his report dealing with the city of George Town, he writes about the sanitary conditions in the schools as follows:—

“Most of the schools are essentially one-room buildings raised from the ground with another room below, about one foot from the ground, apparently enclosed afterwards as the need for accommodation increased. There is no attempt at class-room accommodation in these two rooms, the teaching of all the classes is carried out, with a result peculiarly disconcerting to the medical inspector and others engaged in the examination of children, since in the majority of the schools there was no private room, in which the examination could be carried out. Indeed in one striking case we found it difficult to thread our way through the multiplicity of pupils and benches to the exit.

“The yards vary in size, but are almost universally unworthy of the name of playgrounds. They are inadequate in size and in many cases neglected and covered with rubbish and debris; in some schools I found no receptacle for refuse, nor was the necessity for such an article in any degree recognised. Some, however, were remarkably clean and tidy.

“The drainage, as a rule, was very unsatisfactory, and in the rainy weather, some of the yards resembled quagmires rather than grounds in which children could be afforded facilities for healthy outdoor exercise.

“There is no more unpleasant chapter in the story of the insanitary conditions of these schools than that which is concerned with the arrangements for the disposal of excreta.” (As regards the conditions of urinals and privies, we have already given the extract from Dr. Rose’s Report in Section V under Public Health.)

141. And as regards schools in Demerara, his testimony runs as follows :—

“It may be said, however, that the conditions in these schools present an even graver aspect than in the City schools described in a previous report. Drinking water is derived from vats or from so-called ‘sweet-water’ tranches, the vats being either inadequately covered or not covered at all. One school was blessed with 2 cups, most provided with none at all; where one cup is shared among 100, would seem, however, to be a healthier procedure than to use the hands as a drinking cup, as most of the children do. In one school the gutters were in such a state of disrepair that no water ran into the vat. Some of the latrines were pit latrines and some were latrines over open trenches. In two cases at the time of my visit, the trenches were quite dry, and the latrines resolved themselves into dilapidated out-houses over shallow depressions in which heaps of feces made themselves obvious to the channels of both eye and nose. In another case, though the accommodation nominally fulfilled the requirements of the Code, one of the compartments for the boys was in so grave a state of disrepair, that it could not be used; while one of the girls’ compartments was completely blocked by the trunk of a tree, and has been so for some days when I examined the latrines and drew the attention of the school-master to it. Another was spattered with dried feces on the floor, seat, door and sides. Such a condition of things reflects grave discredit on all concerned, and not the least grave aspect of the matter is the apparent failure of some teachers to realise the far-reaching importance of such conditions in their schools.”

142. *Schools on the estates.*—We should like to state our opinion that what Dr. Rose says of the schools of George Town is equally true, for all intents and purposes, of the schools in different parts of the Colony. As regards the schools on the estates, what was said of them by the Report of the Royal Commission of 1871 is, in our opinion, equally true at the present time. They said, “Wherever we had the opportunity of inspecting the schools upon estates we did so, with the result of finding *the education of the coolie children, and even their attendance, to be rather a thing desired than effected.*”^{*} (The italics are ours.)

143. *Number of Indian teachers small.*—The number of East Indian teachers is very small; only 21 out of a total of 939 teachers being of this community. It is to be hoped that in future an increasing number of educated East Indians will be attracted to this profession. It was suggested that in order to give an impetus to the spread of education among the East Indians

^{*} Vide Report of the Royal Commission, 1871, page 194, paragraph 900.

it would be desirable to adopt measures similar to those that have been taken in regard to the education of Mussalmans in India. Another proposal was also put forward by Indian witnesses, particularly Mr. Luckhoo, *viz.*, that in view of the urgent necessity of accelerating the progress of literacy amongst them, it was desirable that the number of Indian teachers should very largely be increased, by importing them from India, if necessary, as was contemplated in the Nunan-Luckhoo Scheme. We doubt not that if action on some such lines was taken, it would have a most beneficial effect on the education of the Indian community.

144. Notwithstanding the fact that there is considerable scope for extension and improvement, it must be admitted that the system of Elementary Education in British Guiana is fairly satisfactory. So far as the provision for Secondary Education is concerned, there is only one High School for the whole colony—the Queen's College which prepares students for Cambridge Local Examinations. For higher education there are no facilities available in the colony; and the students have to go out of the colony to qualify themselves for the Bar, etc. There is one Government Industrial School for the instruction and training of vagrant and juvenile offenders. The majority of inmates are trained in Agriculture. A small number of boys are also trained there as carpenters, tailors, and bakers.

SECTION IX.—POLITICAL STATUS.

145. Our terms of reference require us to report whether any further guarantees in respect of the status of Indian Immigrants are necessary before emigration is re-opened. We were also asked to consider the two alternative forms of the Draft Ordinance, which is contemplated by the British Guiana Government, in order to declare by legislation the existing political equality of Indians with other British subjects in the colony. Before dealing with these points, we think it desirable to give a brief sketch of the British Guiana Constitution Ordinance of 1891 as modified by subsequent ordinances; so that the problem of the political status of Indians in British Guiana may be properly grasped and its practical bearings brought out.

146. *Constitution of British Guiana.*—The constitution of British Guiana is unique in the world. It is not that of a Crown colony, neither can it be described as that of a Dominion. The "elective majority" in the Combined Court exercises practically full control over the budget; but in matters of legislation the will of the Executive is supreme. This divorce between financial control and executive power has not, broadly speaking, led to many dead-locks, and the system seems to be working on the whole in a satisfactory manner; but it is not necessary for us to say whether this device of two-fold check and counter-check is not likely to develop caution on the one hand, and want of responsibility on the other, resulting in the retardation of progress. We have thought it advisable to make a passing reference to this aspect of the constitution, only because on more than one occasion responsible persons in British Guiana ascribed to it most of the ills, such as lack of drainage and irrigation, or the insanitary conditions, from which Indians along with other communities were suffering.

147. The representative of the Crown and the Executive head of the administration is the Governor, who holds office during the Sovereign's pleasure, and is responsible to the Colonial Office.

- (1) *Executive Council*.—He is President of the Executive Council, consisting of the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General and such other persons as may be appointed from time to time by the King. No salary is, however, paid to these Councillors as such. The Council is purely advisory, as the expression "Governor-in-Council" means the Governor acting with, but not necessarily in accordance with the advice of, the Executive Council.
- (2) *Court of Policy*.—The Chamber which deals exclusively with legislative measures is called the Court of Policy. It is composed of the Governor, seven official members and eight elected non-officials. As the Governor can give a casting vote in addition to the one which he has as an ordinary member, there is a standing official majority of one in the Court. Its power to pass laws is subject to the veto of the Crown and to the power of the Crown to pass by Order in Council Ordinances which cannot be altered by the Court of Policy.
- (3) *Combined Court of Policy*.—While the laws are passed by the Court, it has no authority over the money Bills which are considered and passed only by the Combined Court of Policy which, however, has no voice in measures other than the financial ones. The Combined Court consists of the Governor, the other members of the Court of Policy and six additional elected members who are known as financial representatives. Thus, there is a standing non-official majority of six in the Combined Court; and the popular element can exercise fairly complete control over the raising of taxes and the voting of supplies. Both the non-official members of the Court and the Financial Representatives hold office for five years, but are eligible for re-election. Both are elected at one and the same time; and the same electorate returns both classes of members.

148. *Qualifications of Voters*.—Every male British subject can become a voter if he satisfies certain conditions.

A voter must—

- (a) have attained the age of 21 years,
- (b) be under no legal incapacity,
- (c) know how to read and write some language and
- (d) have not received within 12 months previous to registration any relief from public or parochial funds.

In addition, he must possess certain property or income qualifications.

A person residing in a county may be registered as a voter if he—

- (1) owns 3 acres of land or a house of the annual rental value of at least 50 dollars, or

- (2) has taken on rent at least 6 acres of land or a house of the annual rental of 192 dollars, or
- (3) enjoys an annual income or salary of 480 dollars, coupled with 6 months' previous residence in the county, or
- (4) pays direct taxes of at least 20 dollars coupled with residence.

But in a city or town, only those persons who—

- (1) own a house or a house and land of the annual rental of not less than 500 dollars, or
- (2) occupy a house of an annual rental of at least 120 dollars, or
- (3) possess a yearly income of 480 dollars, or
- (4) pay annually direct taxes of 20 dollars, coupled with 6 months' previous residence,

are eligible for registration.

149. The qualifications of a voter may be summarized as literacy and the possession of property or income of a specified minimum value. It is not necessary to give in detail the qualifications of a candidate for the Court or the Combined Court. Two other facts of great significance from the Indian point of view may be mentioned here. First, every voter has to apply to the registering officer to be registered as a voter, before his name can be entered on the voters' register, and a somewhat complicated procedure is laid down in this connection. Secondly, though a voter is required to read and write some language, either European or Asiatic, all the papers, including ballot papers, are printed only in English. It is worthy of note that Mr. Luckhoo is the only East Indian who has been returned to the Combined Court, while not a single Indian has up till now sat in the Court of Policy.

150. *Voters.*—According to the last Census report, the total number of voters in the colony is about 5,600; made up of 563 Europeans, 482 Portuguese, 96 Chinese, 3,396 blacks and coloured, and only 428 East Indians. Or, to put it differently, we may say that, roughly speaking, out of every 100 voters, 68 are black and coloured, 11 Europeans, 10 Portuguese and only 8 East Indians. There are, roughly, 86,000 adult males; of whom the blacks and coloured number 38,000, and 41,000 are Indians. Of the total adult male population of the European race, 43·7 per cent. are on the voters' list, while in the case of Chinese, the Portuguese, the black and the coloured, the figures are 11·8, 19, and 8·8 per cent. respectively. But only one per cent. of the adult male population of the Indian community are registered as voters. This fact adds point to the contention of the East Indians that their community, to borrow the language of the Indian section of the Colonization Committee, has been practically disfranchised.

151. *Causes of low number of Indian Voters.*—Several causes have been assigned for this extremely low number of Indian voters, among which may be mentioned the following:—

- (a) Unlike the Negro, the Indian is said to have no taste for politics.
- (b) He is actively discouraged by certain influential missionaries from taking part in politics; and as they are believed to be sincere

well-wishers of the Indian community, they are able to exercise their influence successfully in this direction. We have discussed this point with some of these persons, who, themselves unasked, told us that they had been dissuading Indians from taking an active interest in politics.

- (c) While Indians enjoy theoretical equality, most of them are, for all practical purposes, disfranchised; as, being illiterate, they cannot become voters, even if they are otherwise qualified.
- (d) Even when they are literate (*i.e.*, they can write and read some Indian language), they are practically disfranchised, as the voting papers, etc., are all printed only in English. For this reason, a large number of literate and qualified Indians do not care to get themselves registered as voters.
- (e) The procedure for the registration is complicated and troublesome.

152. As regards (a), there is some truth in the statement that the Indians on the whole have hitherto not been very keenly interested in politics. Men who had to live during the period of indenture, for at least 5 years, in the words of Mr. Gokhale, under conditions bordering on semi-slavery, could not be expected to turn politicians immediately on regaining freedom. But to a far greater extent have the other causes enumerated above been responsible for keeping them away from politics. The influence of missionaries of the type referred to in (b) has largely contributed towards it. The causes alluded to in (d) and (e) have not been mentioned now for the first time. For instance, in 1915, the then Immigration Agent General commented in his report for that year on the fact that there were so few Indian voters; and laid emphasis among others on (c) and (d) as being the reasons on account of which so few Indians cared to get themselves registered, or which prevented them from applying for registration.

153 *Remedies suggested*—In view of the above, a good many proposals, emanating from various quarters, have been put forward with the avowed object of securing to the Indian community in both the Courts representation commensurate with their numerical strength, and adequate for the protection of their vested rights and special interests. Nomination, communal representation with a separate electorate, a combination of the two, and proportional representation of various communities, with a general register, have been advocated at one time or another. Some of these proposals have been coupled with the suggestion that the clauses in the constitution, relating to the qualifications of a voter as well as to the procedure for the registration of voters and the recording of votes, should be so amended that the Indians would be placed on a footing of practical equality with other races in the colony. It is not necessary to agree with any of these recommendations, in order to realize either the persistence or the importance of the problem. The Indians represent a separate and distinct race in the colony; and both as labourers on the estates and in virtue of the fact that they constitute an overwhelming majority of rice growers, they have special class interests to safeguard. There are 95,000 Hindus and 18,000 Mohammedans, whose faiths, customs and usages cannot be said to have received—not owing to any want of sympathy

but merely from a lack of knowledge on the part of others who profess a different faith—that consideration which would perhaps have been shown in an abundant measure, if there had been spokesmen in the Court of Policy and the Combined Court, to represent their point of view, when measures affecting them were on the legislative anvil. Looked at from any point of view, the claim of the community for a fair and adequate representation appears to be incontestable. It becomes overwhelmingly strong, when the services which they have rendered to the colony are borne in mind. It is admitted on all hands that but for them, the sugar industry of the colony would have collapsed years ago; and that they have saved the colony from utter ruin and bankruptcy. Not only have they proved to be the mainstay of the sugar industry, but they have also contributed materially towards the development and exploitation of the colony, by building up the rice industry, and that under the most adverse circumstances. They have cleared jungles and converted marshy swamps into rice fields. In the words of Dr. Cropper of the Canadian Mission, who has been working as a missionary in British Guiana for more than 25 years, “Without the labour of the East Indian, the colony would to-day have been little more than a mangrove swamp fringed with courida bush.” Yet the men who have to play so important a part in the economic life of the colony have practically been without any representation during the last 85 years. Surely, neither justice nor expediency can be pleaded for continuing indefinitely the existing system, as suggested by the Hon’ble Mr. Webber and others. That being so, it is surprising that neither the Sanderson Committee (1910) nor the Hon’ble Major Wood and his colleagues who visited the West Indies in 1922, while recognising the justice of the Indian claim in Trinidad in the matter of representation in the legislature, should have made any analogous recommendations in respect of the Indians in British Guiana, although in the latter they form 45 per cent of the population, while in the former they are less than 33 per cent.

154. *Our proposals.*—Coming to the specific proposals that have been made and to which we have already referred, we should like to make our own position clear in regard to two of them. We are not in favour of nomination or communal representation. We are in favour of dropping the literacy test and otherwise modifying the present system to the following extent:—

- (a) Instead of requiring every person desirous of being registered as a voter to apply to the Registering Officer, it should be the duty of the Government to prepare a preliminary list of all eligible voters in the first instance; and
- (b) The ballot-papers should be printed in such a way as to make it easy for all voters, literate and illiterate, to record their votes.

155. If the suggestion (a) is adopted, the procedure for preparing the list of voters in British Guiana will be brought into line with the practice followed in the United Kingdom and India. Already, in British Guiana a similar method is in vogue in the preparation of the list of jurors. As regards (b), the present practice is admittedly wrong; as it places those voters who do not know English at a serious disadvantage in recording their votes. His Excellency the Governor was good enough to tell us that steps would be taken at an early

date to ensure that the names of the candidates are printed in the principal Indian languages along with English on the voting slips. We should however prefer the placing of a dot of a distinct colour against the name of each candidate, which may continue to be printed in English; or, if separate ballot boxes be provided for each candidate, that each box is coloured differently.

156. *Dropping of literary test suggested.*—As the above proposals (a) and (b) are in the nature of details, we do not anticipate any difficulty in their being adopted, especially when it is remembered that they will benefit all communities alike. Their adoption by itself will not improve the position of the Indians materially, unless the proposal for the dropping of the literacy test is also adopted. We regret to say that a very large number of East Indians in the colony, who may satisfy the property or income test, are debarred from exercising the vote on the ground of illiteracy alone. And, yet, they pay taxes and are affected by the laws of the colony as much as any other community. If our proposal be not found acceptable, the existing inequality will be perpetuated indefinitely. We have already pointed out that in British Guiana, the State has not been able to provide a sufficient number of schools for all children of the compulsory school age, although more than 45 years ago, an Ordinance making elementary education compulsory was placed on the statute book. Apart from this fact, there has been a deplorable indifference on the part of the authorities towards the education of the children of the Indian community. More than three generations have passed since the first batch of Indians landed in British Guiana; and we find that the percentage of children at school in the case of the Indian community is lowest, when compared with that of the other communities. The charge is therefore not made without some justice that the State has failed in its duty towards them. The present illiteracy of the Indians being thus the fault of the Colonial Government, to deny the franchise to them on that ground would be tantamount to penalizing them for the fault of the State. Indian representatives went so far as to say that, if they had had their own representatives in the two Courts, they would not have been in such a sorry plight; and they fear that any further delay in removing this disability will have the undoubted consequence of retarding the whole progress of the community. The objection that an illiterate voter is of necessity inferior in commonsense and shrewdness to an average voter who just knows how to read and write, can scarcely be regarded as of any weight, especially in the case of those immigrants who have shown such remarkable enterprise and initiative in a far-off land and amidst strange surroundings. We are convinced that until a fair and adequate representation is secured to the East Indian community of British Guiana, the present state of backwardness will be perpetuated; and, without committing ourselves to any particular method by which the desired end may be achieved, we earnestly press for an early consideration of this question, so that a satisfactory solution of it may be arrived at as soon as possible. In our opinion, this is the crux of the Indian problem in British Guiana; and on its decision, it is pointed out, depends whether in future the East Indian of British Guiana is to be a self-respecting and self-reliant citizen, or whether he is to remain a serf, a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water, as he has been up till now.

157. To another and a small matter in this connection, a passing reference may be made. There is a provision in the Ordinance relating to the Municipality of George Town which requires the voter to be able to read and write English in addition to the property or income qualifications. This obviously operates against those Indians who can read and write some language other than English, and renders this Ordinance even less liberal than the Constitution Ordinance. His Excellency the Governor, was, however, pleased to assure us that this anomaly would soon be removed by amending the Ordinance.

158. In regard to the Declaratory Ordinance, the suitability or otherwise of which we were asked to examine, we are of opinion that one on the lines suggested by the Government of India will be very suitable and its passing advantageous to Indians. (*Vide* Appendix XII.) We further suggest that the Ordinance should make it clear that no land shall be reserved, now or hereafter, for any community or shall be leased on such terms to an individual or a corporation, as will have the effect of excluding Indians merely on racial grounds from enjoying equal rights with others. Moreover, if the proposal for a West Indian Federation materializes at any time, the Government of India should request the Colonial Office to give an undertaking that the said Declaratory Ordinance shall be embodied in the Federal Constitution.

SECTION X.—MARRIAGE.

159: *Present Marriage Law.*—In addition to the General Marriage Law of the Colony, special provision is made for Immigrants in Part X of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891, a copy of which is appended (Appendix XVI). Under it the Immigration Agent General keeps a Register of Immigrants found to be married at the time of their arrival (these marriages include those of spouses who arrive in separate ships.) Another Register of Marriages contracted in the colony is also kept. Immigrants may be married by:—

- (1) A Magistrate,
- (2) A Christian Minister, or
- (3) A Priest of the immigrants' religion.

160. *Indian marriages invalid without Registration.*—In all cases a certificate from the immigration department is required, showing that there is no impediment to the union; but only in the case of a marriage solemnized by the Priest. does the failure to obtain beforehand such a certificate, invalidate the marriage. With the object of removing this anomaly as well as of making uniform the civil requirements in all the three cases, Part X of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891 has been revised (Appendix XIII) and simplified into a proposed Marriage Ordinance for Asiatics, which has not yet been placed before the legislature. Most of the marriages would have been valid but for the omission to obtain the certificate. The acting Immigration Agent General has prepared a note relating to the law governing marriages among immigrants (*vide* Appendix XIV & XV) from which the following extract will be in place:—

“The effect of an illegal marriage of course is that children of such a marriage are illegal and in some cases may fail to inherit the

property of their parents. On the other hand, this disability disappears if such parents are careful to make wills and is to some extent obviated by petition to the Governor respecting escheat; while at the same time latitude is afforded to the immigrants in the observance of their own usage without the complexity (to mention one alternative) of separate laws for the diverse races of this community. Provision is made for the protection of wives in Section 157 *et seq.* for the punishment of persons of spouses' property in Section 154; for the punishment of persons who entice, cohabit with or unlawfully harbour wives of immigrants, in Section 160; for divorce, in Section 162; and for the division of property when couples cease to live together, whether they are legally married or otherwise, and without resort to Divorce under the law, in Section 156." (*Vide Appendix XIV.*)

161. In this connection the following observations of a missionary may be noted as representing the views held on this subject by prominent non-Indians in British Guiana:—

"The impression prevails that the great mass of the children of the East Indians of the Colony who are classed as illegitimate, should be regarded as legitimate: it being presumed that they are the offspring of parents who have been duly married in accordance with the rites of their own religion. This impression is the foundation of the widespread desire to bring these ceremonies within the pale of law. Unfortunately this impression is not correct. It is a fact that the parents, very many of them, of the children in question, have passed through a marriage ceremony, but not with each other; and the children are not the fruit of that ceremony. Far and away, the majority of boys and girls and the very young men and women who are married according to the rites colloquially described as Bamboo Marriage "separate from each other and, later in life form connection of their own choice. The great bulk of the children born are the children of this subsequent Connection.

162. It is clear that marriages performed by priests other than Christian Ministers are not recognised as lawful, until a certificate from the Immigration Department has been obtained. The proposed legislation would have the effect of placing a marriage solemnised by a Hindu or Mohammanan priest on an equal footing with that performed by a Christian Minister. To the extent to which this is done, the position would be certainly improved; but in our opinion, marriages celebrated according to Indian customs should be recognised as lawful, without the imposition of unnecessary and irritating conditions, such as requiring the registration, either by the parties themselves or the priests concerned, of the marriages before or after the performance of the ceremony

*In British Guiana, Indian marriages celebrated according to Indian customs are called "Bamboo marriages" by non-Indians.

Even if registration of marriages be insisted upon for one reason or another, it should be clearly stated that the failure to do so would in no wise affect the validity of such unions. The Indians, Hindus as well as Mohammandans, brought to our notice the anomalous position in which they were placed under the present law, and strongly pressed for the recognition of Indian marriages celebrated according to their respective religious ceremonies and customs as lawful. The Government of the Colony has given repeated assurances to the Government of India that it is the established policy of British Guiana to allow full liberty to the immigrants in the exercise of their religious beliefs and practices. It is hardly necessary for us to point out that the law of marriage and inheritance which governs Hindus or Mussalmans is their personal law; and wherever they go, they are bound by the same law. The responsibility on the part of the Governments of those colonies for allowing such immigrants the full and unrestricted liberty of observing their personal law, is far greater because Indians have gone there not of their own accord, but at the invitation and at the expense of their Governments. Moreover, the recognition of such marriages will in no way interfere with the rights of the other communities. We have deliberately refrained from dwelling upon the grave moral injury that the present law has been inflicting upon the community. We lay special stress on the urgent necessity of an early solution of this question which is of long standing, and vitally affects the social well-being of the East Indian Community in British Guiana.

SECTION XI.—REPATRIATION.

163. *Number of Repatriates to India from 1913 to 1921.*—The number of repatriates from British Guiana from 1913 to 1921 was 1,917, of whom 1,295 left for India in the years 1913-14. Owing to the war, the despatch of repatriated immigrants to India had to be stopped for five years from 1914-18. From 1919, repatriation was resumed, 809 returning in 1919, 2,362 in 1920 and 452 in 1921. Of the total repatriated, 2,778 were males, 1,315 females and 824 children. 386 paupers consisting of 250 males, 32 females and 1 children, and constituting a little more than 8 per cent. of the total, came out at the expense of the British Guiana Government under the terms of the agreement. (*Vide* Appendix XVII and XVIII.) It is interesting to note in this connection, that while British Guiana would not bear the cost of repatriating more than 112 paupers or 4.6 per cent. of the total repatriated amounting to 2,362 in 1920, Trinidad repatriated that year at its own expense 347 paupers including lepers, or, 39 per cent. of 893 souls who sailed for India; that is to say, Trinidad spent on the repatriation of paupers three as much money as British Guiana did in 1920. If the percentage of paupers to the total repatriates for the two colonies be taken into consideration, it will be seen that where, for every hundred repatriates, British Guiana pays the expenses of only one pauper, Trinidad bears the cost of sending out 12. It is not due to there being fewer paupers in British Guiana than in Trinidad; but to the attitude of Trinidad being more in consonance with the demands of justice, not only in the matter of repatriating paupers, but also in regard to the cost of passage and clothing. The Guianese Government having to administer a huge area with a population of roughly three souls to a square mile in the colony, are believed to be more concerned

with keeping in the colony as many immigrants as possible than dealing justly with the claims of repatriates.

161. *Causes of sudden fall in number of repatriates in 1921.*—That this belief is not altogether groundless is shown by the following table:—

Year.	Numbers repatriated.	Immigrants' share of the cost of passage.	Cost of warm clothing payable by immigrant.
		\$	\$
1913	603	26	5
1919	809	46.3	7 5
1920	2,369	48	10
1921	454	78	25
1922	Not known	75	20

The sudden rise in the passage money and the cost of clothing by 47.5 dollars from 55.5 dollars in 1920 to 103 dollars in 1921, had the inevitable consequence of reducing the numbers of the repatriated, roughly, from 2,400 in 1920 to 500 in 1921. That this consequence was both unforeseen and undesired by the authorities is shown by the comment of the acting Agent General on this big drop of about 80 per cent in the number of immigrants in 1921 as compared with 1920. He says in his annual report for 1920, "this out-flow of useful colonists stopped in the following year, 1921, when only 500 immigrants (as against 2,468 in 1920) embarked for India." We understand that Trinidad charges in 1922 \$ 80 for a return passage and 7.5 dollars for clothes as against 78 dollars and 26 dollars respectively in British Guiana.

165. *Procedure of Repatriation.*—As the question of repatriation is a prolific source of discontent among the East Indian emigrants of British Guiana, and, from the Indian point of view, of more than ordinary interest, we think it desirable to give below important portions of a statement on Repatriation drawn up at our request by the Acting Immigration General:—

"The Law governing Repatriation is found in part XIII of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891. * * *

"Immigrants are registered for return passages at the Immigration Offices in three counties of the colony—Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo.

"The registrations are in respect of passages to be provided during the year in which they are made. If an immigrant registers for return passage and does not present himself at the time of despatch of the return ships of the year in which he has registered

such payments as he may have made are refunded to him on application, and he must register again in the subsequent year which he may choose for repatriation.

- “The Registration of Immigrants who have become entitled to a return passage to India either wholly or in part, at the expense of the Immigration Fund, commences on the 2nd January and under ordinary circumstances continues until the 31st March. Each immigrant is informed at the time of registration as to the ship in which he will probably be embarked.
- (2) “The following shows the parties who are entitled to a return passage:—
- “(a) All immigrants introduced into the Colony at the expense of the Government or of the Immigration Fund previous to the 1st September 1895, are entitled to be registered free of charge if they have completed a continuous residence of ten years.
- “(b) All immigrants introduced at the same expense between the 1st September 1895 and the 30th September 1898 are required to pay a portion of the passage money, viz.:—
Males $\frac{1}{2}$, and Female $\frac{1}{4}$.
- “(c) All immigrants introduced at the same expense after the 1st October 1898, are required to pay, the men $\frac{1}{2}$ and the women $\frac{1}{4}$.
- “(d) All children born in the Colony are allowed free passages to India, provided their parents are entitled and accompany them.
- “(e) Illegitimate children born in the Colony are, as a rule, registered with their putative fathers, free of charge, provided their mothers are dead; but if their mothers are alive and do not go with them, then the putative father is made to pay for their passage. Where the father is married and he and his wife have separated he has no legal claim to a free return passage for any children he may have by another woman, even if such woman be dead, but the case should be reported for instructions of the Immigration Agent General.
- “(f) Orphans are, as a rule, allowed a free passage to India, but all cases should be submitted for the consideration of the Immigration Agent General. (The term orphans here used means a child who has lost both parents.)
- “(g) Grandchildren (the children of Creoles who are accompanying their parents; in fact all children beyond the second generation) are required to pay.
- “(h) Creoles and others married to immigrants entitled in their own right, acquire such right through their husbands. This right, however, does not extend to females introduced after the 1st October 1898, who are debarred by the terms of Ordinance 27 of 1900, section 9, sub-section 3 and clause (a). In these cases the husband has married the woman with a full knowledge of the law, and must therefore pay the full cost of the passage.

"(2) In all cases where children are concerned, the Governor has the power, where he thinks it will be for the benefit of the child, to refuse a passage.

(3) "Registration of passengers, i.e., those who have no right to return passage does not commence until the 1st June, by which time the clerk in charge should be in a position to say whether there will be accommodation. At the time of registration it must be carefully explained that although the money has been received no passage can be guaranteed. The granting of a passage depends solely on the numbers of those entitled who come up for embarkation.

(4) "The registration of paupers, i.e., those who are unable to pay their shares of the cost of the return passage and cost of clothing and are pronounced permanently incapable of labour, "*luchur aur garib*," according to the wording of their agreements, as a rule does not commence until the 1st June. No application should be received from any pauper unless he produces his certificate of exception from labour, or satisfactorily accounts for its loss. The order for registration in each case must be made by the Immigration Agent General, or, in his absence, by the Senior Immigration Agent."

166. *Grievances re repatriation.*—We shall proceed to state briefly the main grievances relating to repatriation which were brought to our notice by the East Indians. Their complaints are as follows:—

(1) That although they had been told before embarkation in India that they would have to pay only Rs. 30 to Rs. 36 for return passage after ten years' residence in the colony, and Rs. 5 for clothing and the promise had been repeated on their disembarkation in Demerara, they were now asked to pay twice and even thrice that amount for the return passage and clothing.

(2) That although in the English text of the agreement which they signed before leaving India it is expressly laid down that "such emigrants as are *destitute or disabled* shall, with children, dependants or wives, be entitled to a *free return passage*; the immigration authorities have been persistently refusing to allow destitute emigrants free return passages on the ground that they were not also disabled.

(3) That in the repatriation of paupers the number of such persons to be sent back is determined by the number of berths available in any immigrant ship rather than by the number of paupers in the colony entitled and anxious to return (*vide* paragraph 4 of the above statement).

(4) That the arrangements on board the return ship as regards accommodation, food, etc., are unsatisfactory.

167. *Exorbitant charges.*—The complaint about the charges being exorbitant was made so universally and repeated with such persistence by both the labouring and non-labouring immigrants that it was impossible to ignore it or treat it as an exaggeration. Wherever we went, whether it was a village or a sugar estate, at a public meeting or a private interview, the story of the undertaking as to their being required to pay between Rs. 30 and Rs. 35 only towards the cost of a return passage was repeated by thousands of East Indians with so much force and earnestness that it was utterly impossible to doubt their sincerity or to question their veracity. That some such undertaking was given seems to be beyond doubt.

168. Let us take the case of those who left India in 1911 and who, having completed their term of ten years' residence, became qualified for an assisted return passage in 1921. We find the cost of passage from India to British Guiana in 1911 was £11 or 53 \$ (Canadian). That this is at variance with the terms of the contract is obvious; but it is equally apparent that if they had been told all that the clause implied, very few, perhaps, would have cared to emigrate in these circumstances. The emigrants' complaint is two fold: (a) that when the terms of the agreement were explained to the intending immigrants before embarkation in India, they were told that their share of the cost of return passage would amount to Rs. 30; but when they reached Demerara and the terms were again explained, they were told that they would have to pay not Rs. 30 but 30 dollars, and (b) that even then, the amount has been raised from 30 dollars to 78 dollars, as the rate of fares has gone up. What is true in the case of an emigrant who went in 1911 in respect of this grievance, is equally true of others who had gone before or after him. In view of the above it would appear that while the strict letter of the agreement may be on the side of the British Guiana Government, considerations of equity and good faith are on the side of the emigrant. In support of the plea that not the printed letter of the agreement but the pledged word of the Agents of British Guiana should prevail, an immigrant may, and as a matter of fact did, urge, that while the agreement did not contain a word about the penal clauses under the indentured system, he was punished for committing what were offences under the Immigration Ordinances, of which he had not been told a word, when enlisting. We were informed that the Government of Trinidad, after careful consideration of the above circumstances, were only charging a fixed sum of \$ 30 towards a return fare, irrespective of the increase in the passage money.

169. We, therefore, would recommend to the Government of India, to move in the matter as early as possible; and we trust that the Government of Guiana will show the same fairness in this respect as the Government of Trinidad.

170. *Charges for clothing high as compared with Trinidad.*—Again, British Guiana charged \$25 in 1921 and is charging \$ 20 in 1922 for clothing and blankets supplied to the emigrants on the return voyage; while in Trinidad, the charge is only 7.5 \$. It means that in British Guiana the cost has gone up 400 per cent. on the pre-war rate as compared with 50 per cent. in Trinidad. The difference between the two rates is too great to be explained

away on the ground of an increase in prices ; in our opinion, it is extremely unlikely that the articles supplied by British Guiana are so superior in quality as to justify the increase.

171. *Destitute or disabled immigrant*.—We came across a large number of destitute immigrants who, having completed 10 years' residence, had become entitled to free repatriation under the terms of the agreement, and were clamouring to be sent back to India. The emigration authorities have, however, been refusing their applications on the ground that they are not also disabled. They rely in support of their action on the words "*lachar aur garib*" in the Urdu version of the phrase "*destitute or disabled*" used in the English text of the contract. It will be noticed that "*or*" of the English text has been translated into "*aur*" in Urdu, which is obviously incorrect. We may point out that the responsibility for the translation of the agreement from English into Urdu is that of the British Government ; and it cannot and it should not profit by its own mistake. Again, it does not appear that Tamil repatriates fare better than Hindustanis, although the Tamil translation reproduces quite correctly the "*or*" of the English original.

172. If by "*destitute*" was meant one who is both destitute and disabled, there was no need to use in the English text two words, when one word would have done equally well, and join them with "*or*" instead of "*and*." The intention of those who drafted the agreement in English is absolutely clear. They meant to refer to two distinct classes of emigrants ; that is, (a) to those who were without any resources as well as (b) to those who were suffering from bodily disability. On either of the two distinct grounds, an emigrant could claim free return passage ; one ground being economic in character, and the other physical. We, therefore, earnestly urge the Government of India to take at an early date such steps as may be necessary for the free repatriation of the destitute as well as of the disabled.

173. As regards the repatriation of those immigrants who are admittedly paupers, the procedure followed by the Acting Agent General is so manifestly unjust that it is not necessary to deal with it at any length. Referring to the question of compassionate passage, in the section relating to Trinidad, Messrs. McNeill and Chimman Lal said in their report "Every year a certain number of invalids, mendicants, etc., are given free passages. The number varies partly with the demand and partly with the accommodation, but has of recent years increased. In January 1912, 195 passages were issued to paupers, invalids, etc. Domiciled Indians pressed for still more liberality... In each of the three districts there are numbers of immigrants who, owing to bad health, intemperance or general thriftlessness, drift into mendicancy and most Indians would rejoice at their departure." (*Vide* their Report, Volume I, page 38, paragraph 11.) In regard to British Guiana, they emphasised the desirability of repatriating infirm persons, and the number of such persons in British Guiana is very large, who have no relatives and wish to return. The presence of a large number of broken-down men, who for one reason or another drift into mendicancy or become jobbers in George Town, is one of the main causes on account of which other communities look down upon East Indians. Under the indentured system a very

large number of beggars and other undesirable persons used to be recruited. The emigration of such persons, however, has been of no possible benefit to them or to the community domiciled in the colony. East Indians earnestly desire their departure, while they themselves would rejoice to return from an "uncongenial and inhospitable," land as they put it, to their land of charity and hospitality. Even persons who have been and are receiving relief, in the Alms House, are not, as they should be, treated as "paupers" for the purpose of repatriation, because the number of paupers to be sent out in any given year or by any particular boat, depends not on the demand, but on the accommodation that might be available. The sooner such persons are repatriated the better it will be for all the parties concerned. And, after having taken into consideration every possible aspect of the question, we have deliberately come to the above conclusion.

174. *Return ships.*—It appears that the return ship is provided in accordance with the "Indian Emigration Act, XXI of 1883," and is furnished with provisions, clothing, fittings, etc., as required thereby. These arrangements, however, are far from satisfactory. We therefore suggest the desirability of taking early steps to improve them. Further, we think that there should be more frequent sailings from British Guiana to India than provided at present.

175. There is yet another point to which we should like to refer in this connection. In paragraph 2, sub-section (4), of the Acting Immigration Agent General's statement, it is stated that this right to free return passage "does not extend to females introduced after the 1st October 1893, who are debarred by the terms of the Ordinance 27 of 1903." Since, in the terms of the agreement, there is no mention of so serious a curtailment of this right it seems to us to be inequitable to debar such wives of immigrants from the exercise of a right which is theirs under the agreement, on the ground of some law, of whose existence on the statute-book, no emigrant could reasonably be supposed to have any knowledge. The right course to follow would have been to clearly state the changes made by the Ordinance of 1893 in the agreement itself. That not having been done, it is highly unfair to take away this right on the merely technical plea put forward by the Agent General.

SECTION XII.—THE SCHEME EXAMINED.

176. *Inter-departmental Committee's Report.*—For a proper appreciation of the actual proposals regarding the conditions to regulate emigration from India in future, that are now put forward by the British Guiana Government, it is necessary to set forth a few salient facts bearing on this question.

177. After the announcement by the Government of India of their decision to abolish the indentured system, the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent to the Colonies concerned a despatch, dated the 31st March 1916, in which he suggested the desirability of their holding a preliminary conference, with a view to consider the new situation that had thus arisen. The conference accordingly met at the Port of Spain, Trinidad in the following June, and unanimously came to the conclusion that the continuance of emigration from India was of vital importance to the colonies which they represented, not merely from the point of view of development, but also for the maintenance of existing

industries. The delegates were anxious to remove any conditions attaching to the then existing scheme which might be repugnant to Indian opinion, and to afford to the immigrants the freest scope for development. With this object, they put forward certain proposals which it is not necessary to refer to here in detail. It was followed by another conference of the delegates, representing the West Indian Colonies and Fiji, which was held at the Colonial Office in London in 1916, when a scheme was formulated. This scheme was later on placed by the representatives of the Colonial Office before the Inter-departmental Committee, consisting of the representatives of the Colonial Office, and the India Office, and presided over by Lord Islington. The proposals of the Islington Committee seem to have been shelved by the Government of India.

178. *Genesis of the British Guiana Colonisation Scheme.*—In the meantime, while protracted negotiations were going on between the Colonies concerned and the Colonial Office on the one hand, and the Indian Government on the other, regarding the terms on which emigration from India should once again be permitted, the sugar interests in British Guiana were being put to great inconvenience and heavy loss on account of the serious contraction of labour supply, arising from the stoppage of indentured immigration from India. After the cessation of hostilities in 1918, while the price of sugar rose to a very high figure, and large profits were being reaped, the total acreage under sugar cultivation in British Guiana, it was stated, had to be reduced to a considerable extent for want of sufficient labour. It was in these circumstances that the Colonisation movement was inaugurated in British Guiana; and a deputation headed by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Wilfred Collet, was sent to England to represent to the Colonial Secretary "the needs of the colony, both for the maintenance of present industries and for their extension." The object of the deputation was to secure emigrants, not only from India, but also from China, Africa and Madeira. As a result, however, of the interviews between the Colonial Secretary and the members of the deputation, it was decided to approach only the Government of India, with a request to raise the embargo on emigration. A deputation headed by the Hon'ble Dr. Numan, Attorney-General of British Guiana, came to India in 1919, and placed their scheme of Colonisation before Sir George Barnes who was then in charge of the portfolio of Industry and Commerce. (Hereafter we shall refer to this scheme as the Numan-Luckhoo Scheme.) The Imperial Legislative Council appointed a committee to examine Messrs. Numan and Luckhoo with regard to the scheme, and to make such recommendations to the Government as they deemed fit. The committee examined them, and adopted a resolution in which they, while taking a favourable view of the scheme, advised the appointment of a deputation to be sent to British Guiana, with the object of investigating the local conditions. Accordingly, the present deputation was sent to that colony in December 1921.

179. On reaching British Guiana, the Deputation was informed by His Excellency Sir Wilfred Collet that the Numan-Luckhoo scheme was unauthorised by, and unacceptable to, the Guianese Government; and that it must be considered to be purely unofficial in character, and, therefore, in no way binding on the Colonial Government. Another scheme drawn up in 1920, with a

enter into detailed proposals for carrying it into effect in the event of its proving acceptable."

- (g) We examined, among others, the Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo and Dr. Wharton, both of whom came out to India as members of the British Guiana Deputation, and they emphatically stated that the scheme was a duly authorised one. The Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo stated in the course of his evidence "The Deputation from this Colony was headed by His Excellency the Governor himself, who introduced us to Lord Milner, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, who in turn obtained an interview for us with the Under Secretary of State for India, Lord Sinha. He also examined us on the scheme, and suggested that a small Deputation should go to India and put forward the scheme. A letter was forwarded, in which the Indian Government were informed that we were going over, and that we were the representatives of this Government. Our credentials were examined, and then we were treated as the accredited representatives of the Government of British Guiana."

"The Chairman:—'His Excellency introduced you'?"

"Mr. Luckhoo.—'Yes; he was present on both occasions.'"

"The Chairman.—'So you were the accredited representatives of British Guiana? And yet your scheme and promises have been altogether thrown overboard'?"

"Mr. Luckhoo.—'It would seem so, and I would like the idea to be dispelled that Dr. Nunan and myself were not authorised, on behalf of this Government, to put forward the best possible proposals in order to enlist the sympathy of the Indian Government with a view to carrying out a scheme of Colonisation in British Guiana. To say that we were not authorised would be incorrect.'"

Similarly, the Hon'ble Mr. Brassington, the Hon'ble Mr. Webber, and the Hon'ble Mr. Thorne, who was the only member of the Combined Court to vote against its resolution *re* the colonization scheme, did not contradict the statement of Mr. Luckhoo and Dr. Wharton that the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme was authorised.

180. *Comparison between Nunan-Luckhoo scheme and Governor's scheme.*—We shall now proceed to compare the Governor's scheme with (1) the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme and (2) the scheme formulated by the Interdepartmental Committee (Appendix XX); and state the conclusions we have arrived at in regard to the Governor's scheme. Both the scheme and the memorandum have been so vaguely and ambiguously worded that it is difficult to find out exactly what some of its provisions mean. For instance, it is not clear whether emigrants who are desirous of taking up land forthwith on their arrival will be entitled to free passages or not. Similarly, it is not stated whether the inducements, such as improved cottages, reward grants of land, etc., are to be offered to the labourers already in the Colony on the same

terms as to the new comers. In regard, however, to both these points, we were informed by the authorities that the answer would be in the negative. It is further mentioned in the scheme that an adult male working for seven hours a day could earn on an average 4s. 2d. per day. This might have been true in 1920, but is not so now.

181. *Governor's Scheme*.—The Governor's scheme and memorandum are given below in extenso:—

“ This memorandum is issued under the authority of the Commissioner of the Government of British Guiana and sets out the terms that Government undertakes to observe in respect of persons who are accepted as Colonists and emigrants to British Guiana under that Colony's Colonisation Scheme.

“ An adult man or woman accepted as a colonist will receive :—

“ (1) A free passage to British Guiana, for himself or herself, wife, children and such dependents as may be permitted to accompany them.

“ (2) Employment with registered employers, if they desire such employment at the outset, at the current rates of wages which are such that—

“ An ordinary able-bodied man can earn 1s. 2d. at piece work in the field, in seven hours.

“ No prospect of a fall in these rates can be foreseen.

“ (3) Free housing for three years if employed with a registered employer; for married persons, separate married quarters or cottages. A number of separate cottages are now being built.

“ (4) Free hospital and medical treatment for three years if employed with a registered employer.

“ (5) Free rations for children under eleven years of age, for twelve months after arrival.

“ Free milk rations for children under five years during the whole-time their parents remain in the employment of a registered employer.

Free rations will be issued for a period of six months to pregnant nursing women working with a registered employer.

“ (6) A free return passage to India after seven years' residence in the colony for adult colonists and their dependents. An assisted passage after five years' residence in the Colony, towards which each adult emigrant will contribute £7-10-0 or one quarter of the cost, whichever is less. An assisted passage after 3 years' residence towards which an adult emigrant will contribute £15 or one half of the cost, whichever is less.

In the case of colonists' children under 10 years of age, the above amounts are halved.

" Any individual or family will be sent back free of charge at any time if the Government of India's supervising officer or the Chief Colonisation Officer so directs.

" (7) A special Reward Grant of Land, protected from, or not liable to, floods, drained and suitable for cultivation, of five acres to the head of a family or two acres to a colonist (man or woman), where the claimant has engaged in any form of agriculture under a registered employer for three years continuously.

" The title to such land will be conditional on the fulfilment of the requirements of the British Guiana Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation. The fees payable for the Reward Grants of Land will be five annual payments of 4s. 2d. an acre each, made in advance at the beginning of each year.

" The cost of preparing these Reward Grants of Land as stated above will be borne by the Government of the Colony.

" (8) A colonist who has applied for or received a free or assisted return passage to India will not receive a Reward Grant of Land. No colonist who has received a reward grant will receive a free or assisted passage unless he has fulfilled all the requirements of the Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation.

" (9) Emigrants who are eligible for return passage may commute or defer such right in exchange for a free grant of land, subject to carrying out the condition as to beneficial occupation."

182. *The Governor's Memorandum.*—The following is the memorandum relating to the above scheme by His Excellency the Governor of British Guiana:—

" (1) Hitherto the only terms proposed with regard to Indian immigrants have been those which, it has been suggested, should be given to immigrants whose passage to the colony is paid by the colony, and who have no means by which they can start agricultural operations immediately on their own account. Up to the present moment, nearly every indentured immigrant had to start work as the employee of some other person, and the immigrants who have made such remarkable progress in the acquisition of property began their career in this manner.

" (2) Under the new system, the immigrant, if he works for anybody else, can choose his own employer. If he is able to support himself for a little while, and has some small means of his own, he can almost at once become a small farmer on his own account.

" (3) The financial aspect of the introduction of immigrants most of whom will during the first three years work under registered

employers, is different from that of immigrants who immediately on arrival start work on their own account. Registered employers will probably have to contribute a small sum for each day on which labour is done by a recently introduced immigrant. These small contributions will in time go to some considerable way towards paying the cost of return passages of those immigrants who desire to return.

- “(4) It is within the power of the Government, without reference to the Legislature, to give grants of Crown Land to any person who are likely to make a good use of them, and it is part of the policy of the Government to make such grants to immigrants who are their own masters, so as to induce them to settle permanently in the colony.
- “(5) Similar grants would be made to immigrants on their first arrival if they were in a position to occupy the land immediately; but it is possible that available Crown land within reach of the market may require some expenditure before an income can be derived from it. When the immigrant has a certain amount of money himself, the Government would be willing to help him by advance repayable over a term of years, but it cannot make such advances without the previous consent of the Legislature. Such consent would probably be freely given in times of prosperity, but would be withheld whenever there is financial stress. In times of financial difficulty, it would no doubt be advisable to suspend temporarily the introduction of immigrants.
- “(6) There may be immigrants who would arrive in the colony at their own expense either by immigrant ship or by ordinary means of conveyance. To such immigrants the free grants of land that would be made would be more liberal than in the case of immigrants whose passage to the colony was paid from the Government Funds.
- “(Possibly, if it was known that a certain number of families were coming at their own expense, the Government could prepare for their reception, plots of land with dwellings thereon, the Government bearing the cost of preparation of the land and the erection of buildings to an amount equal to the ordinary cost of introduction of immigrants. Any scheme of this kind would in each case have to be previously approved by the local Legislature.)
- “(7) It is impossible to say how many acres of land would be given, as the value of the land differs so much in different localities. Most of the sugar lands on the coast are even at this time of depression, worth some £20 an acre, and have cost much more than that to be put into their present condition with drainage and sea defence. On the other hand, there are lands which can be utilised at a comparatively low cost, and for each the only permanent requirement would be the actual cultivation

of half of it within a term of years to be fixed. In all these cases, it is necessary for an agreement to come to between the immigrant and the Government.

“(8) It is doubtful whether the Legislature would be willing to assume the obligation to give free passages back to India in the case of immigrants who did not serve for a minimum period under registered employers; but it would probably agree to repatriate any immigrants whom the representative of the Indian Government in the colony might for special cause deem it desirable to repatriate.

“(9) The Government will not feel bound to make grants to any immigrants not previously approved by its own agent”.

183. *Governor's scheme summarised.*—Under this scheme, emigrants on arrival in the colony will have to engage in some agricultural work under some registered employer for a period of three years, in order to qualify for grants of specially prepared lands. As regards those emigrants that wish to start farming on their own account, the idea seems to be that they should go to the colony at their own expense, where they would be given free grants of land on a more liberal scale, and could also get from the Agricultural Banks loans for agricultural improvements. But it is not certain whether those emigrants that engage in agricultural work for three years from the date of their arrival under an employer other than the registered one will be entitled to claim assisted or free return passages to India. This curtailment of right to assisted or free repatriation has been suggested for the first time in His Excellency the Governor's memorandum; although his scheme, in paragraph 6, promises free or assisted return passages to all adult colonists and their dependants. This modification will result in sending all emigrants desirous of securing free or assisted return passages to the sugar plantations only. As the *Daily Argosy* of British Guiana has put it in its leader of the 24th February 1920, “If Indian immigrants come here..... they would in the natural course of things be attracted to sugar estates.” The scheme seems to have been drawn up mainly in the interests of the sugar industry, while the rice growers, most of whom are East Indians, will not benefit by the reopening of emigration to the same extent.

184. *Compared with Nunan-Luckhoo Scheme.*—A comparison of this scheme with the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme shows that the former differs from the latter on several points, and that these differences are of a vital character. The following important features of the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme are not to be found in the Governor's scheme:—

- (a) It provides for large schemes of irrigation and drainage. (*Vide* “British Guiana and the Empire, 1919,” pages 4-5.)
- (b) The inducement of land settlement is to be offered to old settlers as well as to fresh emigrants on similar terms of service. (*Vide* “British Guiana and the Empire, 1919,” pages 4-5.)
- (c) An organised campaign of sanitation is to be initiated. (*Vide* “British Guiana and the Empire, 1919,” pages 4-5.)

- (d) Water supply is to be improved. (*Vide* "British Guiana and the Empire, 1919", pages 4-5.)
- (e) Agriculturists with families, if any, emigrating from India, and desirous of working on land of their own, immediately on their arrival in the colony, are to be given free passage to British Guiana. As regards repatriation, they are placed on terms of equality with those that start as labourers.
- (f) Similarly, reward grants of five acres of land, specially prepared, are to be given to both classes of agricultural settlers on the completion of three years' residence, during which time they may have been engaged either on their own account or as labourers, in any form of agricultural work in the colony.
- (g) Non-agricultural settlers are also to be encouraged to emigrate by providing free passages for them in some cases and assisted passages in others. Traders and small capitalists will be given cheap passages.
- (h) One religious minister for each group will be taken free on each voyage with right of repatriation free.

185. Thus, it is obvious that while the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme provides for the free immigration of both classes of agricultural settlers, namely, those who would in the first instance commence their careers in the colony as labourers as well as others who on arrival, instead of seeking employment, would straight-away purchase or lease lands and start farming on their own account, the Governor's scheme promises free passages only to those emigrants that undertake to serve under some employer for a period of three years. Further, while, the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme offered equal facilities in regard to free or assisted return passages and reward grants of lands to both classes of agricultural settlers, the Governor's scheme aims primarily at securing a supply of labourers only. Under the former, some inducement, however inadequate, was offered to non-agricultural settlers; the latter, being principally a labour scheme, does not include them within its scope. Even in regard to the purely labouring section of immigrants, the Governor's memorandum suggests a further entailment of their right to free or assisted return passages. Then, again, while the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme recognised the urgency of improving sanitation, housing accommodation and water supply as well as drainage and irrigation, the Governor's scheme is studiously silent on these important points. The latter, further, differs from the former in the discrimination it makes against the old settlers in the matter of inducements to work, such as improved types of houses and "reward grants of lands," offered to the new comers. The Governor's scheme, in these circumstances, must be regarded as one radically different from the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme which was placed by the duly accredited representatives of British Guiana before the Committee of the Imperial Legislative Council for consideration.

186. *Compared with the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report.*—The Governor's scheme as modified by the memorandum, is practically identical,

so far as it goes, with the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report on all major points. The vital points of difference, however, are two:—

- (1) The former does not require an immigrant to undergo six months' probation while the latter does, and
- (2) While under the second scheme all the immigrants will be entitled to assisted or free return passages as well as reward grants of land under the first scheme, it is only the employees under the registered employers who will get these benefits. In order however, to bring out clearly the substantial identity of the two proposals, we give below in a tabular form their main terms.

Governor's Scheme.

1. A free passage to British Guiana for himself and herself, wife, children and such dependants as may be permitted to accompany them.

Islington Committee's Scheme.

The immigrant will as at present arrive in the colony entirely free of debt and of any financial liability connected with the cost of his introduction into the colony.

While it is considered impracticable to insist upon any hard and fast proportion of single men to families, the emigration of whole families containing young unmarried girls, but persons below the age of 18, will be assisted to emigrate only when accompanied by their parents or guardians. To discourage the emigration of women of an undesirable class, women unaccompanied by their families will not be assisted and the rule requiring a certain proportion of women to men will be abolished.

The non-working dependants of an immigrant will not be rejected medically merely on the ground that they are physically incapable of work or on the score of age.

A written statement shall be given to each intending emigrant and explained to him, stating the terms of his employment and the conditions of life in the colony to which he proposes to emigrate. Emigration from pilgrim centres will be prohibited during times of pilgrimage or festivals.

Governor's Scheme.

2. Employment with registered employers, if such employment at the current rate of wages is desired.

An ordinary able bodied man can earn 4s. 2d. at piece work in the field in seven hours. No prospect of a fall in these rates can be foreseen.

3. Free housing for 3 years if employed with a registered employer; for married persons separate married
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Islington Committee's Scheme.

IV-1. An employer specially selected as being able to provide conditions of employment and living, which the Governor in Council may deem to be adequate, will be chosen by the Protector of Immigrants for each immigrant on arrival. The immigrant will be required to remain with this employer for six months. The Protectors of Immigrants having power to sanction are required during that time (for?) a change of employment, should he see reason to do so. After this period of six months the immigrant will have perfect liberty to change from one employer to another upon a month's notice.

At no time will the immigrant be under any indenture or any contract other than the above, and the relation between him and his employer will be purely that prevailing in the colony between any master and servant. The immigrant can only be proceeded against for any breach of engagement by way of civil suit in the ordinary course of law, and will be liable to no criminal penalties.

IV.-2-(a). (1) A *minimum wage* will be fixed which will bear to the minimum wage at the time of Mr. McNeill the same proportion that the cost of living when the wage is fixed bears to the cost of living then (when it was estimated at 3s. 6d. a week). This minimum wage will require revision every five years on the same proportional basis. In the calculation free rations to women and children granted in accordance with IV-3 will be excluded.

2-(b). (1) All wages will be paid regularly and in full, *i.e.*, without deductions.

IV-3. The provision of married quarters separate from the "single" quarters will be made compulsory

Governor's Scheme.

quarters or cottages. A number of separate cottages are now being built.

4. Free hospital and medical treatment for three years if employed with a registered employer.

5. Free rations for children under eleven years of age, for 12 months after arrival.

Free milk rations for children under five years, during the whole time their parents remain in the employment of a registered employer.

Free rations will be issued for a period of six months for pregnant and nursing women working under a registered employer.

7. A special reward grant of land protected from or not liable to floods, drained and suitable for cultivation of 5 acres, will be given to the head of a colonist family or of 2 acres to a single colonist (man or woman), where the claimant is engaged in any form of agriculture under a registered employer for three years continuously.

The title to such land will be conditional on the fulfilment of the requirements of the British Guiana Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation. The fees payable for reward grants of lands will be five annual

Islington Committee's Scheme.

upon all employers of more than 20 adult male Indian immigrants, and will be insisted upon as far as practicable in the case of all employers on the Register.

IV-6. The existing regulations and provisions will continue in force, and will be applicable to immigrants under the new system. Under the present regulations, in addition to other medical care, hospitals, public or private, are provided at which immigrants are treated free of charge either as in-patients or out-patients.

IV-3 (a). During the first twelve months after arrival in the colony, children under 11 years of age will be entitled to free rations on the scale to be determined by the Colonial Government: while children under five years of age will be given free milk rations during the whole time that their parents remain in the employment of an employer on the register.

(b) Free rations will be issued for at least six months to pregnant and nursing women working under an employer on the register.

7 (iii) Each adult male immigrant employed in an agricultural industry will be granted for his personal use and cultivation a garden plot of one-tenth acre, if he desires it, after six months' service. A larger plot, up to one-third acre, will be made available to industrious workers in the nature of a reward.

Land not exceeding five acres in extent, will be granted to an immigrant after three years' employment under employers on the register, subject to a reasonable annual rent in the case of lease-holders. The rent will vary according to the fertility and

Governor's Scheme.

payments of 4s. 2d. an acre each made in advance at the beginning of each year.

The cost of preparing these Reward Grants of land as stated above, will be borne by the Government of the colony.

6. A free return passage to India after seven years' residence in the colony for adult colonists and their dependants. An assisted passage after five years' residence in the colony, towards which each adult emigrant will contribute £10-10s. or one-quarter of the cost, whichever is less. An assisted passage after three years' residence towards which an adult emigrant will contribute £15, or one half of the cost, whichever is less.

In the case of colonists' children under 10 years of age, the above amounts are halved.

Any individual or family will be sent back free of charge at any time if the Government of India's supervising officer or the Chief Colonization Officer so directs.

Islington Committee's Scheme.

position of the land and will be subject to revision every three years. For ten years after the grant the immigrant will be prohibited from alienating or encumbering his right in the land except with the sanction of the responsible department and the department will have power further to resume any land not brought under cultivation within two years of the grant.

Any immigrant wishing to return to India will be granted for himself and his dependants half the passage money after three years, three quarters after five years, and the whole after seven years' continuous residence in the colony. But the acceptance of a grant of land under the special facilities outlined in paragraph 3 will be held *ipso facto* to extinguish the claim to a free or assisted return passage. By this it is not to be understood that the immigrant will at any particular period be required to make a choice between a return passage and a grant of land, but merely that the acceptance of a grant of land under the special conditions outlined above will be taken as extinguishing his right to a return passage.

Any immigrant who has availed himself of a free or assisted return passage under these conditions, should he return to the colony, shall have no right to a second free or assisted return passage to India.

Six months' previous notice must be given by any emigrant of his intention to claim a free or assisted passage.

*Governor's Scheme.**Islington Committee's Scheme.*

8. No colonist who has applied for or received a free or assisted return passage to India will receive a reward Grant of Land. No colonist who has received a reward grant will receive a free or assisted passage unless he has fulfilled all the requirements of the Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation.

9. Immigrants who are eligible for return passage may commute or defer such right in exchange for a free grant of land, subject to carrying out the conditions as to beneficial occupation.

The Protector of Immigrants shall have the right, subject to approval by the Governor in Council to grant at any time free return passage in full in cases where he deems repatriation desirable. This right will extend to the cases of immigrants whose claim to a return passage has been extinguished by the grant of land and who may have been reduced subsequently to indigent circumstances.

187. We said above that the two schemes were identical. But while the Inter-departmental Committee's scheme contains provisions relating to (a) emigration and supervising staff, (b) Depots, (c) Conditions of the colonies and (d) Surgeons on Emigrant ships; the Governor's scheme is silent on these points.

188. What has already been stated, makes two points in regard to the scheme under review absolutely clear first, that it is frankly a labour scheme; and secondly, that it has been devised mainly in the interests of the sugar planters. The resumption of emigration from India under such a scheme will tend to affect adversely the condition of the resident labourers, Indians as well as others, in the matter of wages, housing and land settlement. The resident labour population is apparently excluded from the scope of the benefits under the scheme, though the scale of wages paid to it will be determined by the rate at which the new comers are paid. Similarly, as we were informed by His Excellency the Governor, the improved types of cottages will be reserved for immigrants who may go hereafter, while the old labourers will continue to live in the old ranges. Therefore, the adoption of the present scheme will place resident labourers at a serious disadvantage, as compared with the new comers. One would expect that the resident labourers should have the first claim to the benefits of land settlement. To neglect their claim for prior consideration is unjust. It will breed discontent which may lead to friction between residents and new comers. There is another point that needs emphasizing. Under the Governor's scheme an immigrant can get as a reward grant five, or two acres as the case may be, of specially prepared land after three years' service, under

a registered employer. These labourers who went to the colony under indenture have put in more than the required period of residence, and, in consequence, acquired greater experience and knowledge of agricultural conditions prevailing there. And yet they are not to be given land, which the new comers are offered. Surely, under any scheme of land settlement, preference should be given to those who have larger experience, due to the longer period of work. That it has not been proposed may be due, as was pointed to us by more than one witness, to the fact that there is at the present moment no land specially prepared and within easy reach of the market available for purposes of settlement. "It is not a case of land crying for settlers, but of men crying for land and crying in vain", said the representative of the Farmers' conference.

189. *Evidence analysed*.—The opinions received in regard to the merits of the Governor's scheme may, for the sake of convenience, be considered as falling into three separate categories, according to the different interests represented by various witnesses: first, the planting and commercial interests; secondly, the representatives of the non-Indian community other than the planters; and thirdly, the Indian community in the colony.

190. *Evidence of the planters*.—The Hon'ble Mr. Brassington, President of the Sugar Planters' Association, and of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, may be taken as representing the views of the first group. He favoured the scheme as he thought that it would be very unwise to bring labourers of any sort and dump them on land. They must undergo a period of apprenticeship on the sugar estates, in order to get acclimatized and acquire a knowledge of local conditions. It was a stupendous proposition, he said, to bring people to settle on land through any other channel than the sugar or cocoanut estates. He admitted that the Indians already in the colony were entitled to preference in regard to the grant of land; but added, that some of the promises made by Dr. Nunan and Mr. Luckhoo to the Government of India were impracticable, although made in perfect good faith. He referred in particular to the promise of five acres of land to each man. They could give 500 acres of jungle, he added, but of what use would that be? He stated that owing to the shortage of labour, there had been a serious reduction in the acreage under sugar cultivation, and demurred to the suggestion that there was any insufficiency of work on account of the present economic crisis. Mr. Cressal, who represented the same interests, also emphasized the desirability of the immigrants passing through the sugar estates on to the land.

191. The first point that strikes one in connection with this group is their obvious anxiety not to admit that, under the present circumstances of the colony, it is not settlers, but labourers, that are wanted. They are at pains to emphasize that though the settlement on land was to be the main object for the bringing in of fresh immigrants from India, it was absolutely necessary for them, in their own interests, to put in "three years' probation" on sugar estates. Where is the land available for settling these men? Mr. Brassington characterized the proposal put forward by Dr. Nunan of giving five acres to each man as impracticable; but a similar proposal also forms part of the present scheme. If that was impracticable, would not this one be too? And

if specially prepared land, free from floods and well drained, is available on a large scale why have not the resident Indians, whose claims to preference were admitted by Mr. Brassington, been given land? Moreover, the reason given for insistence on three years' probation does not carry conviction because, for instance, punt-loading cannot teach one how to grow rice. Then, will not one year suffice? The second point to call for notice is the statement that a considerable area had gone out of cultivation, owing to the insufficiency of labour-supply. Now, to a certain extent, it may have been so; but when one remembers the closing down of several sugar estates, such as *Windsor Forests, Cotton, Tree, Bush Lot, etc.*, in the past, or "the complete cessation of work on six sugar estates" and the impending collapse of several others during the present crisis, which has led to the throwing out of employment of 15,000 people, it is difficult to agree with Mr. Brassington. His denial of the fact that there is a large number of labourers out of employment, at the present time, owing to the economic depression does not easily fit in with another statement made by him and other elected members of the Combined Court in the course of their address to the Under Secretary of State for Colonies to the effect that "15,000 people had been thrown out of employment on account of the cessation of work on six sugar estates."

192. *Evidence of Black and coloured witnesses.*—The second group consists of the Hon'ble Mr. Webber, the Hon'ble Mr. Thorne, Mr. Britton on behalf of the British Guiana Farmers' Conference, and Mr. Critchlow who represented the British Guiana Labour Union. The Hon'ble Mr. Webber is the editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, published in George Town, and has also written a novel called "Those that be in Bondage," which deals with the life of an indentured immigrant on the sugar estate. Neither a planter nor an East Indian, he may be expected to take up an attitude of impartiality. That he is in no way an anti-planter, is conclusively shown by the fact that on the Board of Directors owning the paper and responsible for its policy, the planting interest is well represented. The members of the Deputation were impressed by his frankness and fairness in giving evidence. He described the scheme as "very confusing" and "was struck by its lack of preciseness." He further said, "the newly proposed scheme leaves me in a state of mental confusion;" and added "as far as I know, this scheme has no authority behind it. It might be the Governor's personal views, but he has no authority to propound it on behalf of the Colony." Asked if he thought the present scheme to be a labour scheme, he replied that it was. "The moment the element of return passage is introduced, it seems to be frankly recognised that the repatriates are only going to labour for a period to increase their own wealth and incidentally the wealth of the country they go to and then return to their homes. It presupposes they are only going to labour and return, and not as settlers going to a country to make their new homes." He would not favour the resumption of immigration so long as the present economic depression continued and the sanitary conditions were not improved. In the *Daily Chronicle* of the 17th March 1922 he strongly pressed for prior consideration being shown to those who were already in the colony, so that the Government of British Guiana might not be charged with being "more concerned with elaborating schemes for people yet to come, while neglecting those who bore the heat and burden of the day." By all means, when the

industrial situation is opportune, get every additional colonist into the country; but by all that is great, neglect not the call of those who are crying night and day for certain essentials." The Hon'ble Mr. Thorne, who had opposed in the Combined Court the resolution relating to the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme of colonization, described the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme as impracticable and the present one as "idle." In his opinion, they had more labour in the colony than could be profitably utilized; and held that arrangements as regards drainage and irrigation were exceedingly bad. Similarly, Mr. Critchlow, describing the scheme as a labour scheme, opposed it on the ground that it was not a colonization scheme, and that, so far as the supply of labour was concerned, there was not enough work for those already in the colony. He would like to see first the conditions "regarding housing, drinking water, sanitation, etc., improved for those at home." Mr. Britton complained of want of sufficient land well-drained and properly irrigated, where immigrants could be settled. He held that as there was abundant labour available in the colony for its immediate requirements, there was no need to send for more. Asked to state the reason why the Black does not as a rule like to live on the estate or work there, he said "No one likes to live in surroundings which they considered to be bordering on slavery." He mentioned the fact that in 1919 an attempt was made to get labourers from Barbados and Grenada, but that very few of them cared to stay and work on the sugar estates.

193. *Is repatriation essence of labour scheme?*—Before we pass on to a consideration of views of the representatives of the Indian community, we should like to deal with one point made by Mr. Webber, which, we have reason to believe, not only represents his view-point but also finds favour in responsible official circles. The point raised by him is that any scheme which contemplates or provides for repatriation is of necessity a labour scheme. It may or may not be a correct statement of the principle; we are not, however, concerned here with any theoretical discussion, but have to consider a practical proposition. We have to find out whether the proposals under review make, as a matter of fact, any distinction between those who are likely to come away and others who do not.

194. If all the immigrants were to take advantage of repatriation facilities, the financial burden would be so great as to render the scheme utterly unworkable. Out of 238,000 persons who went out to British Guiana, roughly 69,000 persons have so far returned to India. In view of this fact, the assumption made by the framers of the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme, among whom was Mr. Webber himself, that only 25 per cent. of immigrants would exercise the right of repatriation, was in no way unduly optimistic. This being so, it is difficult to resist the inference that the majority of the remaining seventy-five per cent. should continue, it is intended, to work as labourers, for the obvious reason that the provision relating to the grant of specially prepared land does not discriminate between those who are expected to settle down and those who may not do so. This is not, we venture to think, as it should be in a scheme that aims at attracting not merely labourers, but also settlers. It may also be added that the retention of a repatriation clause in a scheme of emigration is necessary for reasons different from those urged by the Hon'ble Mr. Webber. Whenever the Government of India have, in the past, been approached with

a request to agree to the abrogation of the repatriation clause from the agreement under the old indentured system, they rejected the proposal, mainly on the ground that it served as an effective check on the employers against bad treatment of the immigrants. Therefore, the mere existence or otherwise of a clause relating to repatriation in a scheme is not sufficient to determine its character whether it is a labour scheme or not. Another fact to be borne in mind in arriving at a correct conclusion relates to the extent and the character of available land, as well as the number of acres to be given to each man. Any immigration scheme, as already pointed out by us, which purports to import labourers and subsequently to settle them contains this great weakness that at present no satisfactory means exist of settling small holders on the land. There are at present numbers of Indians who desire to take up suitable small holdings; but such small holdings are not available for them in localities and under conditions, in which an average small man can make good. Assuming, however, that such small holdings are available in localities under conditions in which a small man can make good, the grant of five acres in the case of a family or two acres for a colonist, as contemplated under the Governor's scheme, would not yield enough for their or his sustenance; and the inevitable result of it would be that they or he would be forced to continue working under one employer or another, even after the expiry of three years. In these circumstances, it is not so much the element of repatriation as the limited extent of the proposed grant of land and the restrictions attached to it, which makes the Governor's scheme a labour scheme, as distinguished from a settlement scheme.

195. *Indian Representatives.*—Representative Indians in the colony unanimously press for the rejection of the scheme. Naturally, in a matter like this, great weight must be attached to the views of Indian leaders like the Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo and Dr. Wharton, both of whom, as already stated, visited India in 1919-20 as members of the British Guiana Colonisation Deputation. Just as Mr. Luckhoo is a distinguished member of the Bar, so is Dr. Wharton, a leading Medical practitioner. Both of them were strong supporters of the Nunan-Luckhoo scheme, and continued to support it, although by so doing, they became unpopular with a section of their community, that was opposing it. Neither of these two gentlemen favours the present scheme. Dr. Wharton would support a colonisation scheme only if "it embraced what was in the pamphlet issued by him and his colleagues in London, in their capacity as members of the British Guiana Deputation in 1919." Nothing less than that would meet with his acceptance. Asked to state his opinion of the present scheme, the Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo said, "I would not for one moment favour the present scheme being put into operation at all in this colony." He further stated that in submitting the scheme to the Indian Government, Dr. Nunan and he promised that questions of housing and sanitary improvements, etc., would be conditions precedent to the bringing in of more people from India. There was a large number of people in the colony, who desired to get land, but specially prepared land was not available. In his opinion, no immigration should be allowed, unless and until labour already available in the colony had been absorbed. The people

already in the colony, he thought, should be given preference in the matter of land settlement.

Similarly, Mr. Vipree, a Solicitor of George Town, speaking on behalf of the East Indian Association of British Guiana, strongly opposed the scheme. One or two Indians who differed on certain points from their leaders and compatriots were at one with them in opposing the scheme.

196. *Conclusions.*—As a result of what has been stated above, we have come to certain conclusions in regard to the scheme, which we now state as briefly as possible.

(1) *Immediate resumption of emigration, neither desired nor desirable.*—We are satisfied that immediate resumption of emigration is neither desired nor desirable. Evidence on this point is unanimous. When, as a result of the present fall in the price of sugar, six estates have been closed down and fifteen thousand persons have been thrown out of employment, it would be folly to allow emigration. During our enquiry, we did not come across any one in British Guiana, who was in favour of its immediate resumption. His Excellency the Governor informed us at the last interview he gave us that he was not favourable to the resumption of immigration from India till the end of 1924; and not even after that date, until cottages of improved type had been put up. There is, in our considered opinion, abundant labour available for the present, and the question of securing more men can only arise, when the labouring population resident there has been fully absorbed. We found in the colony a large body of workers out of employment; and such of them as were working were bitterly complaining, not without justice, of the extremely low wages they were being paid.

(2) *Governor's scheme only tentative.*—We have already stated that the present scheme is only a tentative one; and that it does not represent a "firm offer." We have roughly indicated in what directions it radically differs from the Nunan-Luekhoo scheme. It is substantially the scheme put forward by the Inter-departmental Committee which was admittedly devised with the sole object of securing from India a continuous supply of labour which had been stopped first by the suspension, afterwards by the abolition, of indentured emigration and the continuance of which was of vital importance to the colonies concerned, not merely from the point of view of development but also for the maintenance of existing industries. It represents no advance upon the offer made to India through the Nunan-Luekhoo Deputation by British Guiana in 1920, but actually makes a serious subtraction from those terms; and marks a definite and complete return on the part of that colony to the proposals made by the Islington Committee in 1917 and found unacceptable at that time.

(3) *Rejection of scheme recommended.*—In these circumstances, and bearing in mind the unanimous opposition to it by the East Indian community of British Guiana, we have no hesitation in recording our deliberate opinion that the Governor's scheme in its present form must be rejected.

SECTION XIII.—SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

197. *Suitable land for settlement not available.*—We consider that the climate and natural characteristics of British Guiana are such as to offer good opportunities for Indian immigration, and great possibilities for Indian settlers to obtain fertile land and become substantial peasant farmers.

198. At present, however, though unoccupied land is available to an almost unlimited extent, the physical conditions which govern the agricultural situation are such that it is hardly possible for ordinary settlers to take up land and cultivate it successfully immediately on arrival in the colony.

199. We think that it would be possible to make available large areas of suitable land for the purpose of settlement by Indian agriculturists, and to call into existence the organisation necessary for securing this result and giving the settlers the assistance which they would need to overcome their initial difficulties. We consider the inauguration of such a scheme to be desirable, though we are doubtful, whether in the near future, it would be possible for the colony to find the large funds needed for opening up the hinterland and making it suitable for settlement.

200. *Health conditions in British Guiana unsatisfactory.*—Health conditions in the Colony are far from satisfactory, as is shown by the excess of deaths over births in several years. The problem of sanitation is intimately connected with the problems of drainage and the arrangements for the supply of pure drinking water. The improvement of sanitary conditions is, in our opinion, of prime importance; it would be, to quote the words of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Clementi, "sheer folly, indeed immoral, to take steps to introduce immigrants into this colony, without at the same time taking the steps to keep them alive and in good health." It is, again, a question of ways and means; and we are not sure whether, in these days of financial stringency, the Colony would be in a position to undertake measures for the improvement of sanitation on a large scale, and commensurate with the requirements of the existing population. In these circumstances we recommend that emigration to British Guiana should not be permitted, until the health conditions there have materially improved.

201. *Declaratory Ordinance to be passed in modified form.*—The Government of British Guiana may take necessary steps to get the declaratory ordinance passed on the lines proposed by the Government of India. But what is of even greater importance is that steps should be taken to secure to the resident Indian population fair and adequate representation in the Court of policy and the Combined Court of Policy. We are opposed to this being effected either by nomination or communal representation. We have indicated in Section IX, dealing with the political status of Indians the lines on which action should be taken to remedy the present state of practical disfranchisement of the Indian community.

202. *Educational Ordinance to be enforced.*—At the present time, the community is from an educational point of view, in a most backward condition. The provisions of the existing Educational Ordinance, should be

given full effect to, in the case of Indian children, as is being done in regard to the children of other communities.

203. The Government of India should represent to the Government of British Guiana that marriages celebrated according to Hindu or Muhammadan religion should be recognised as lawful. Hindus should also be allowed the right of cremating their dead.

204. *Housing arrangements not satisfactory.*—The existing housing arrangements on the estates are far from satisfactory; and so far as the married immigrants are concerned, they are more likely to affect the integrity of family life. The quality and supply of drinking water is not good and requires immediate attention. The employment of children in Creole gangs and several other legitimate grievances dealt with in the body of the report, from which labourers on the estate have been suffering for a long time, should be attended to.

205. *Arbitration Boards.*—To settle disputes regarding wages, steps should be taken to constitute a Board of Arbitration composed of members who, on account of their independence and impartiality, would be acceptable to both parties.

206. *Wages very low.*—The rate of wages at the present time is so low that an average worker cannot earn a living wage. For its present requirements, the Colony has got an abundant supply of labour. Until this has been absorbed and the claims of the existing population to prior consideration in any scheme of land settlement have been fully satisfied, we think there should be no resumption of emigration to British Guiana. As regards repatriation, we have dealt with the various points in the section relating to the subject, and we recommend that the Government of India may take them into consideration for necessary action.

207. *Present scheme unacceptable.*—The Indian community in British Guiana is unanimously opposed to the acceptance of the present scheme. For the reasons given in the body of the report, we have no hesitation in recommending its rejection in its present form. It is merely tentative and does not contain definite terms which British Guiana is willing and prepared to offer to immigrants from India. If and when the Government of British Guiana make a definite offer, we would recommend that a satisfactory solution of the various points raised in the body of our report should be a condition precedent to the consideration of that scheme.

208. *Official Representation from India in British Guiana.*—In order that the interests of Indian immigrants to British Guiana may be safeguarded, we would strongly urge that there be stationed in British Guiana, an officer of the Government of India, who would watch over the interests of Indian immigrants, and keep the Government of India informed of their condition. This officer should also be entrusted with the duty of safe-guarding the interests of Indian immigrants in Dutch Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica. Under the new Emigration Act, the Government of India can appoint such officers, wherever they may deem it necessary. We earnestly recommend

that such an officer may be appointed as early as possible for Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad.

209. *Return Ships.*—The Government of British Guiana should be requested to arrange for more return ships in order to expedite the repatriation of those who are anxious or entitled to come. Arrangements on board these return ships should be improved, and greater regard shown for the comfort and convenience of the passengers.

210. *Conclusions.*—His Excellency the Governor told us that, owing to the present economic crisis, he was not in favour of emigration from India being resumed till the end of 1924, and, not even then, if cottages of an improved type have not been put up.

212. The Indian community of British Guiana would not favour emigration from India until 1930, as they require time to settle down, and to raise themselves from the prevailing state of depression and backwardness. They urge that the immediate resumption of emigration would aggravate and prolong the existing evils. The Hon'ble Mr. Luckhoo is strongly opposed to any emigration for at least another five years. *Indians in British Guiana are strongly opposed to the acceptance by the Government of India of a purely labour scheme.*

P. KESAVA PILLAI,

President.

VENKATESH NARAYAN TIVARY.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S HOME

ROYAPETTA, MADRAS;

20th May, 1923.

APPENDIX I.

Census of population for the periods 1891, 1911 and 1921.

Nationalities.	Periods.			
	1891.		1911.	
	Total Population.	Number of females to every 100 of male population.	Total Population.	Number of females to every 100 of male population.
Europeans other than Portuguese	..	67	3,937	83
Portuguese	12,166	101	10,084	110
East Indians	..	63	1,26,517	73
Chinese	1,05,463	43	2,622	77
Africans (born)	3,714	}	1,114	}
Blacks	3,433		1,14,372	
Aborigines	1,12,135		30,251	
Mixed races	7,463	90	6,901	91
Race not stated	29,039	119	243	125
	347	115		102
Total	2,78,328	..	2,96,041	..
	..	..	2,97,691	..

R. P. STEWART,

Dated 1st April 1922.

Acting Immigration Agent General.

APPENDIX II.

Extract from Despatch No. 41 of 1915 (from the Government of India, to the Secretary of State for India).

The statement below represents the death-rate in the colonies of indentured and, so far as figures are separately available, of unindentured labour:—

Year.	Colony.	POPULATION.		DEATH RATE PER 1,000		General Indian Death-rate in Colony.
		Indentured.	Unindentured.	Indentured.	Unindentured.	
1911-12 ..	British-Curma.	9,141	64,801	17·7	26·4	25·0
1912-13 ..	..	9,453	67,412	12·1	10·4	18·9
1913-14 .	..	9,111	67,336	9·4	20·2	18·6

The above figures do not enable a contrast to be made in all cases between indentured and unindentured population, * * * * *

The death-rates for persons of all ages and for persons of 20—30 years of age, the age which most nearly corresponds to the average age of indentured immigrants, in the United Provinces and Madras, were as follows:—

Year.	Ages 20—30				All Ages and Sexes	
	United Provinces.		Madras.		United Provinces	Madras.
	Per 1,000 Men	Per 1,000 Women.	Per 1,000 Men.	Per 1,000 Women.	Per 1,000 Men	Per 1,000 Women.
1910	20·43	21·66	11·5	11·9	38·67	24·7
1911	23·00	26·71	10·9	11·6	44·95	23·1

The average death-rate in 1914 in Madras and the United Provinces jails, where the inmates are cared for on somewhat similar principles but much more closely than in the colonies, were 11·83 and 11·9, respectively. Allowing for the fact that indentured emigrants are all medically examined before leaving India, and that the housing, sanitation and medical supervision of colonies in the colonies are far superior to anything available for the Indian village population, it is clear that mortality among indentured coolies is decidedly high.

APPENDIX III.

Quantity and value of sugar exported and wages for 1913—1919.

Year.	Quantity of sugar in tons.	Total value.	Price per ton.	Wages per working day.
1	2	3	4	5
	Tons.	£	£	Cents.
1913-14 .. ..	..	..	..	20·08
1914-15	107,138	1,574,823	14·70	19·7
1915	116,224	2,058,952	17·71	20·7
1916	101,650	2,100,472	20·66	22·4
1917	114,007	2,500,029	21·93	24·9
1918	93,902	2,066,784	22·01	27·7
1919	83,140	2,472,660	29·74	31·4

APPENDIX IV.

Increase in prices of sugar and food-stuffs and wages—1914—1919.

Year.			Sugar price per ton %	Wages of men per working day. %	Wages of women per working day %	Price of food- stuffs %
1914	..	..	100.00	100.0	100 0	100
1915	..	..	120.00	103.5	109	126
1916	..	..	140.00	117.0	87.9	130
1917	..	..	148.60	124.5	116.1	199
1918	..	..	149.12	133.5	145.3	212
1919	..	..	200.17	157.0	160.6	238

APPENDIX V.

Comparative Statement of prices and wages for 1913 and 1920.

No.	Items.	IN ROUND FIGURES.		Increase or decrease as compared with 1913.
		1913.	1920.	
1	2	3	4	5
		Tons.	Tons.	
1	Tons of sugar exported ..	107,000	83,800	—23,200
2	Value of sugar „ ..	£1,575,000	£4,193,000	+£2,618,000
3	Price per ton of sugar exported.	£14·70	£50	+240 per cent.
4	Retail prices of food-stuffs (Index number).	100	371	+271 per cent.
5	Amount in dollars paid in wages by certain sugar estates.	1,982,000 (= £412,916)	5,894,000 (= £1,227,917)	+197 per cent.

APPENDIX VI.

Average income and expenditure.

Commodity.				(1)	Quantity per week.		Price, March 1922.	
Bread	2 lbs	3 ozs.	17	Cent ⁴
Sugar	17 lbs.		5	
Milk	3½ pts.		28	"
Rice	3½ lbs.		11	"
Dholl	1 lb. 5	ozs.	13	"
Cocconut-oil	7	"	6	"
Masalah	5½	"	7	"
Salt	3½ lbs		1	"
Flour	7½	"	42	"
Omons		4	"
Tea		4	"
Kerosine oil		6	"
Matches		2	"
Tobacco		12	"
Fuel		24	"
Soap		3	"
Total					1.85	"

(2)

Clothing and Implements.

1. Male. Working.—

				Quantity.	Price, March 1922.	
Trousers	..	..	..	3	2 52	Dollars.
Shirt	..	..	..	3	2 52	"
Hat	..	..	..	....	....	"
Ordinary.—				....	....	"
Trousers	..	..	..	2	1.08	"
Jacket	..	..	..	2	4.80	"
Shirt	..	..	..	2	1.68	"
Singlet	..	..	..	2	1 12	"
Hat (Felt)	..	..	..	2	24. 0	"
Belt	..	..	..	1	0 36	"
				..	17.08	"

 $17.08 \div 52 = 33 \text{ cents a week}$

2. Females.—

Jhula	..	..	..	4	1.44	"
Skirt	..	..	..	4	3.36	"
Petti Coat	..	..	..	4	2.88	"
Orhni	..	..	..	4	1.28	"
Chemises	..	..	..	4	1.44	"
				..	10 10	"

 $\text{Dollars } 10.10 \div 52 = 20 \text{ cents a week}$

(3)

<i>Implements.</i>	<i>Quantity.</i>	<i>Price, March 1922.</i>
1. <i>Male. Shovelmen.—</i>		
Fork	1	2.00 Dollars.
Shovel	2	1.44 „
Cutlass	1	.96 „
Lines .. .. .	..	.48 „
Saucepan	3	.48 „
$5.36 \div 52 = 10$ cents a week		<u>5.36</u> „

2. *Females.*—Hoe Cutlass and Saucepan=4 cents a week.

(4)

Total cost of living, clothes and implements.

Man	Per week.	2.28
Woman	„	2.09

(5)

Earnings per day worked in 1921 :—

From statistics supplied it will be seen that the average earnings per day worked in 1921 is :—

Shovelmen	=56 cents.
Male Weeder	=49 „
Female	=38 „

(6)

Budget.

1. *Shovelmen.—*

- Income in 300 days (a year) $56 \times 300 = 168$ Dollars.
- Expenditure re cost of living, etc. $2.28 \times 52 = 118.56$ „
- Saving in one year $= 49.44$ „
- In ten years therefore, he could save towards return passage or otherwise. $49.44 \times 10 = 494$ „

2. *Male Weeder.—*

- Income in a year of 300 days at 49 cents per day $= 49 \times 300$ cents or 147 Dollars.
- Expenditure on food @ 2.28 per week $= 118.56$ „
- Saving in one year $= 28.44$ „
- Saving in 10 years $= 284$ „

3. *Female Weeder.—*

- Income in one year at 38 cents per day $= 38 \times 300$ cents or 114.00 Dollars.
- Expenditure in one year on food, etc. @ 2.09 per week $= 198.60$ „
- Net saving in one year $= 5.32$ „
- Net saving in 10 years $= 53.0$ „

APPENDIX VII.

Estimated cost of living per week.

(In cents).

Description.	For labour according to the British Guiana deputation to India, 1920.		Per adult according to the Acting Immigration Agent General.		Per adult according to Mr. C. W. H. Collier.		Per adult male according to a Doctor.	
	Quantity.	Price in cents.	Quantity.	Price in cents.	Quantity.	Price in cents.	Quantity.	Price in cents.
(1)		(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Rice	84 ozs.	25½	3½ lbs.	11	1 gallon	20	1 gallon	24
Bread	..	..	2 lb. 3 ozs.	17	6 lbs.	..	1 gallon	..
Flour	112 ozs.	49	7 lbs.	42	2 pints.	36	2½ lbs.	50
Dal	1 oz.	10½	1 lb. 5 ozs.	13	..	16	..	10
Masala, salt, etc.	..	9	..	12	½ lb.	22	7 ozs.	28
Ghee	4 ozs.	16	..	..	2 lbs.	16	½ lb.	16
Meat or fish	..	..	..	..	2 ozs.	10	..	..
Potatoes	..	..	..	..	1 box.	18	..	..
Tobacco*	..	..	..	12	..	2	..	40
Matches*	..	48	..	2	..	0.6	..	..
Tea*	..	..	..	4	..	8	1 lb.	..
Sugar	14 ozs.	6	17½ ozs.	5	2 lbs.	14	3½ pints.	24
Milk	..	..	3½ pints.	28	2 pints.	12	..	21
Kuei	..	..	..	24	..	10	7 ozs.	10
Mustard or coconut oil	7 ozs.	11	7 ozs.	6	..	8	..	8
Kerosene	..	28 (x)	..	3	1 cask	4	112 lbs.	21
Soap	..	21	..	..	..	16	..	..
Ground provisions	112	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTAL	..	\$ 2.24½	..	\$ 1.85	..	2.31	..	\$ 2.88

* Garlic, onions, vegetables, blinis are also included. (x) Including sundries.

APPENDIX VIII.

(1)

Abstract of the Collier Budgets.

SINGLE MALE.			MAN AND WIFE.			MAN, WIFE AND CHILDREN.				REMARKS.
Budget No.	Amount in cents.	Difference as compared with the average.	Budget No.	Amount in cents.	Difference as compared with the average.	Budget No.	Children	Amount in cents.	Difference as compared with the average.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
35	458	+ 163	37	703	+ 172	15	1	315	-334	1. Average for a man 295 cents.
34	383	+ 88	24	502	- 29	43	2	524	-243	2. do. and a wife 531 "
31	371	+ 76	25	160	- 71	29	3	710	-169	3. Average for M plus wife plus 1 child 619 "
32	367	+ 72	38	457	- 74	45	3	572	-313	
16	325	+ 30	36	453	- 78	27	3	565	-320	
33	307	+ 12	8	436	- 95	12	3	525	-360	4. Average for M plus wife plus 2 children 767 "
2	299	+ 4	27	422	- 99	14	7	409	-177	
17	283	- 12	22	426	-105	14	3	403	-182	5. Average for M plus wife plus 3 children 885 "
19	281	- 14	39	378	-153	23	4	638	-365	
4	274	- 21	21	376	-155	26	1	580	-417	6. Average for M plus wife plus 4 children 1,003 "
18	262	- 33	7	297	-234	30	1	526	-477	
2	237	- 58	6	293	-238	41	1	496	-507	7. Average for M plus wife plus 5 children 1,121 "
5	234	- 61	9	272	-259	12	4	466	-537	
20	226	- 69	40	269	-262	13	5	353	-768	8. Average for M plus wife plus 6 children 1,239 "
1	187	-108	10	223	-309	11	6	489	-750	

Budget No.	Name.															Total price in cents.
		Fuel.		Cocoa-nut Oil.		Kerosene Oil.		Soap.		Ground provisions.		Salt, spices, etc.				
		Amount in cents.	Bottle.	Amount in cents.	Bottle.	Amount in cents.	Cake.	Amount in cents.	Amount in cents.	Amount in cents.	Amount in cents.					
1	2	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38		
C 1	Malkan .. ..	..	8	1	5	1	4	1	5	..	24	..	19	187	
C 2	Ram Dhan Singh .. ..	..	8	1	8	1	8	1	5	..	12	..	29	237	
C 3	Padamleh .. ..	..	16	1	8	1	8	1	5	..	12	..	10	299	
C 4	Kaloo .. ..	..	12	1	4	1	3	1	5	..	24	..	27	274	
C 5	Deepoo .. ..	..	8	1	8	1	6	1	0	..	24	..	32	216	
C 6	Dukhore and wife .. ..	..	16	1	18	1	14	2	16	..	16	..	20	293	
C 7	Sardar and wife .. ..	..	12	1	8	1	8	1	5	..	12	..	18	297	
C 8	Schojattion and wife .. ..	..	24	1	24	1	14	2	10	..	16	..	55	460	
C 9	Jagroop and wife .. ..	..	12	1	8	1	14	1	5	..	12	..	19	272	
C 10	Bisesar and wife .. ..	..	12	1	8	1	6	1	6	..	16	..	5	223	
C 11	Algoo and wife + 6 children	..	24	1	10	1	21	2	14	..	24	..	34	480		
C 12	Gajraj and wife, 6 children ..	..	24	1	24	1	21	3	15	..	16	..	20	466	
C 13	Elahi and wife, 5 children ..	..	24	1	16	1	16	3	15	..	16	..	24	353	
C 14	Tulshi and wife and 3 children	..	20	1	27	1	14	3	15	..	36	..	31	403		
C 15	Kottiah and wife and children	..	16	1	16	1	16	2	16	..	24	..	21	315		
C 16	Surjballi .. ..	..	12	1	10	1	16	1	4	..	24	..	15	325	
C 17	Gurpershad .. ..	..	12	1	10	1	12	..	5	..	16	..	14	293	
C 18	Chotey .. ..	..	12	1	10	1	8	..	4	..	24	..	15	262	
C 19	Baldasingh .. ..	..	16	1	10	1	16	..	5	..	24	14	14	281	
C 20	Dwarka .. ..	..	8	1	10	1	8	..	5	..	16	..	11	228	
C 21	Nagina and wife .. ..	..	16	1	24	1	16	2	10	..	24	..	22	376	
C 22	Bhagawansingh and wife ..	..	16	1	24	1	10	..	16	..	36	..	56	426	
C 23	Jhakarj and wife .. ..	..	16	1	24	1	9	2	8	..	48	..	20	432	
C 24	Harchan and wife .. ..	..	32	1	24	1	16	2	8	..	32	..	24	503	
C 25	Kuber and wife .. ..	..	16	1	24	1	16	2	8	..	36	..	23	460	
C 26	Dhondoo and wife, 4 children	..	20	1	24	1	18	..	36	..	36	..	56	580		

APPENDIX IX.

Floating resources of East Indians in British Guiana.

(Prepared by Mr. G. F. Keatinge).

(1) Land purchased by the East Indians in British Guiana —

Year.				Number of purchasers.	Total price paid.
					\$
1915	..	..	..	413	96,898
1916	.	..	..	557	150,216
1917	..	..	..	630	204,860
1918	..	..	..	703	249,723
1919	..	..	.	807	403,605
1920	..	..	..	852	379,949

(2) Accounts of East Indians in Government Savings Bank —

Year.				Number of Depositors.	Total of deposits.
					\$
1915	..	..	..	7,755	393,347
1916	..	..	..	7,335	411,398
1917	..	..	..	7,507	489,801
1918	..	..	..	7,824	539,265
1919	..	..	..	8,220	659,599
1920	.	..	.	6,716	795,180

(3) Amounts deposited by East Indians in the Savings Bank Departments of private banks, apart from larger accounts in the ordinary deposit and current accounts.—

	Date.	Total of deposit.
		\$
Colonial Bank ..	.. March 1922 ..	275,588
Royal Bank of Canada	. January, 1921	414,472
	January, 1922	276,709

(4) There are 27 Co operative Credit Societies with a subscribed capital of \$ 40,420, in which East Indians have a large share, and in which they deposit money freely.

(5) Remittances through Post Office by East Indians to India.—

Year.						Amount remitted.
						\$
1915	..	..	..	..	..	4,410
1916	..	..	..	..	..	7,460
1917	..	..	..	..	..	10,073
1918	..	..	..	..	..	7,935
1919	..	..	..	..	..	12,241
1920	..	..	..	..	..	7,195

(6) Money and jewelry taken to India by East Indian immigrants repatriated to India.—

Jewelry.	Year.	Number of adult Immigrants.	Money deposited with Immigration Agent for remittance to India.
\$			\$
12,670	.. 1919	.. 814	.. 76,023
41,618	.. 1920	.. 2,245	.. 249,710

(7) Floating resources of East Indians during 1920-22.—

	\$
Money invested in land during 1920	379,919
Deposits in Government Savings Banks	795,180
Deposits in Savings Bank Department of Colonial Bank, March 1922	275,588
Deposits in Savings Bank Department of Royal Bank of Canada	414,472
Remittance by Post Office to India in 1920	7,195
Taken by repatriated immigrants in 1920	249,710 Money.
Taken by repatriated immigrants in 1920	41,618 Jewelry.
Total	<u>2,163,712</u>

APPENDIX X.

Table of trading and other licences.

Total population	East Indians.	Chinese.
	125,000	3,000
B. Number of trading and other licences taken out in 1920 for—		
	East Indians.	Chinese.
(1) Carts, horse or mule hire	49	8
(2) Donkey carts	2,508	127
(3) Hucksters	1,189	24
(4) Colony craft (river and sea)	7,925	153
(5) Dogs	903	547
(6) Cycles	981	507
(7) Gold .. .. .	..	4
(8) Spirit shops	8	17
(9) Provisions shops	575	251
(10) Drug shops	46	38
(11) Cook shops	25	32
(12) Bread shops	6	24
(13) Stores	64	112
(14) Wine and malt to sell	99	135
(15) Indian hemp	23	56
(16) Guns	658	94
(17) Revolvers	13	12
(18) Arms and ammunition .. .. .	..	1
(19) Gunpowder .. .. .	..	11
(20) Tobacco	2	335
(21) Public entertainment	629	27
(22) Motor cars	87	55
(23) Motor cycles	99	10
(24) Balata	3	1
(25) Boilers .. .. .	..	12
(26) Carriages, 4-wheel, hire	53	2
(27) Carriages, 4-wheel, private	30	3
(28) Carriages, 2-wheel, hire	3	1
(29) Carriages, 2-wheel, private	2	1
(30) Carriages, hackney	1	2
(31) Horse or mule, hire	21	40
(32) Horse or mule, private	61	2
	14	..
GRAND TOTAL	16,077	2,644

APPENDIX XI.

Elementary Education Ordinance, 1918; Amendment Ordinance 1919, No. 12.

“ 17. *Age of children who may be employed.*—After the commencement of this Ordinance, no person shall take into his employment or shall employ any child : —

“ (1) who is under the age of nine years, or

“ (2) shall employ on school days during school hours any child being of the age of nine years or upwards and under the age of twelve years.

“ Provided that “ Employment ” does not include service rendered by a child to its parents being such service as is usually given by children to their parents.

“ (3) Section eighteen is hereby repealed and the following substituted therefor : —

“ 18. *Responsibility of employer for elementary instruction of any child employed as a domestic servant.*—Any person who receives into his house as a domestic servant, or permits any child to perform any work in his house shall be deemed to have undertaken the duty of a parent with respect to the elementary education of such child so long as the child remains with him, and if he does not cause such child to receive efficient elementary instruction he may be proceeded against as if he were the parent of such child, but the duty of the parent should not be diminished or discharged nor shall the parent be thereby exempted from liability to be proceeded against as hereinafter provided.”

APPENDIX XII.

A-II.

A copy of the Declaratory Ordinance. (As drafted by the Hon'ble Mr. Nunn.)
A BILL RELATING TO THE STATUS OF IMMIGRANT BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Whereas it is desired to encourage the immigration into the Colony of British subjects from various parts of the British Empire and

Whereas it is expedient with a view to facilitating such immigration that a declaration should be made as to the legal and political status of such immigrants.

Be it therefore enacted and declared by the Governor of British Guiana with the advice and consent of the Court of Policy as follows:—

1. Any British subject who has hereafter entered or may hereafter enter the Colony as an immigrant has not been and shall not be subject to any legal, political or other disability, disqualification or incapacity by reason only of his race or place of origin.

B.

Extract from a copy of the telegram dated 9th February 1922, from the Viceroy to Secretary of State for India.

* * * * *

Re-draft Ordinance.

* * * * *

"Paragraph 3.—We concur in amendment of clause 1 as proposed by Secretary of State. Both drafts mention only British subjects, but as no doubt subjects of Indian States have emigrated and will emigrate to British Guiana we suggest such persons should be included in Ordinance.

* * * * *

"Paragraph 4.—We should suggest following amendments to draft Ordinance. In paragraph 1 of preamble for "desired" substitute expedient. "For body of Ordinance substitute "no British subject and no subject of a State in India who enters or has entered the colony as an immigrant, or is resident or permanently settled therein, shall be placed or shall be deemed over to have been placed, before the passing of this Ordinance, under any legal, political or other disability in the Colony only by reason of his race or place of origin."

Schedule of amendments to original draft.

Title.—Words “ of non-European race or origin ” *inserted* after the words “ British subjects.” Words “ all classes of ” *deleted*.

Preamble.—Word “ declare ” *substituted* for “ remove any doubt as to ”.

In clause 2 (1) words “ shall be deemed to ” *struck out* and after the word “ apply ” the words “ and have always applied ” *inserted*.

In clause 2 (2) words “ shall be deemed to apply ” *struck out* and “ applies and have always applied ” *inserted*.

In clause 2 (1) words from “ under the British Guiana Constitution Ordinance 1891 ” to the words “ or under any other Ordinance ” *omitted*.

In clause 2 (1) “ prescribed ” *substituted* for “ presented.”

APPENDIX XIII.

A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE OF ASIATICS.

Be it enacted by the Governor of British Guiana, with the advice and consent of the Court of Policy thereof, as follows :—

1. *Short Title.*—This Ordinance may be cited as the Asiatic Marriage and Divorce Ordinance, 1922.

2. *Interpretation of term "Asiatic."*—In this Ordinance unless the context otherwise requires, the term "Asiatic" means any person introduced or coming into this colony from Asia, whether directly or indirectly, and whether wholly or in part at the expense of the Immigration Fund or otherwise, and includes any descendant of such a person.

3 (1). *Keeping of Register of Marriages of Asiatics contracted in the Colony.*—The Immigration Agent General shall keep a Register of Marriages of Asiatics contracted in the colony according to Form No. 1 in the Schedule to this Ordinance.

(2) *Schedule Form No. 1.*—In such register the number of any registration shall be the same for the husband and the wife, and shall be continued in regular sequence.

4. *Marriage of Asiatics by Marriage Officer for Asiatics.*—The Governor on the recommendation of the Immigration Agent General may appoint such Magistrates, Pandits, Moulvies or other persons as he may deem fit to be Marriage Officers for Asiatics for the purposes of this Ordinance and may prescribe from time to time a scale of fees to be charged by such Marriage Officers, and may revoke any appointment so made.

5 (1) Before celebrating a marriage between Asiatics such Marriage Officer shall obtain from the Immigration Agent General a certificate according to Schedule Form No. 2. Form No. 2 in the Schedule to this Ordinance signed by him to the effect that there does not appear from the records of the Immigration Department to be any impediment to the intended marriage.

(2) The Marriage Officer shall thereafter require the parties to sign a notice, which shall be furnished to them free of charge by the Marriage Officer and which shall contain a declaration by the parties that, to the best of their belief, there exists no lawful impediment to their marriage, and, if the female is under fifteen years of age, that the consent of her father if alive and in the colony, or if he is dead, of her mother, if alive and in the colony, or if her father and mother are both dead or absent from the colony, of the Immigration Agent General, has been obtained. The Marriage Officer, if not a Pandit or a Moulvie shall thereupon give notice according to Form No. 3 in the Schedule to this Ordinance of the intended marriage by posting or delivering the notice to the Magistrate's Clerk of the Judicial District who shall, as soon as possible after

Schedule Form No. 3.

receipt of the said notice, exhibit the same for three weeks in a conspicuous place at the Court-house nearest to the place of residence of the parties or of one of them or at the Court-house nearest to the place of the intended ceremony, but where such Marriage Officer is a Pandit or a Moulvie he shall exhibit the notice for three weeks in a conspicuous place at the Mosque or Temple nearest to the place of residence of one of the parties. If the parties reside in different Judicial Districts, the proceedings as to notice of an intended marriage mentioned in this section shall be taken in each district.

Provided that where objection has been raised to a marriage the Marriage Officer shall suspend the celebration of such marriage until he shall receive a further certificate from the Immigration Agent General under sub-section (2) of section eight of this Ordinance.

(3) Marriage Officers for Asiatics may perform the marriage ceremony in accordance with the rites of any religion to which the Marriage Officers belong.

(4) No marriage celebrated under this Ordinance shall be valid unless the Marriage Officer, the parties to the marriage and the witnesses to the marriage at the time of the celebration shall in the presence of each other execute a certificate in the form set out in Form No. 4 in the Schedule to this Ordinance.

(5) Immediately after the celebration of a marriage, the Marriage Officer shall deliver to each of the contracting parties to such marriage a certified copy of the certificate thereof according to Form No. 4 in the Schedule to this Ordinance and shall within twenty-four hours after the celebration of the marriage forward a certified copy of the said certificate to the Immigration Agent General and the certificate to the Registrar General.

(6) The Registrar General shall duly record all marriages celebrated under this Ordinance and duly file and safely preserve in his office the certificates received by him under sub-section (5) of this section.

6. *Prohibition of certain marriages.*—No marriage shall be celebrated under this Ordinance or if so celebrated, the same shall be null and void *ab initio*, where it is shown that the parties are within the prohibited degrees enumerated in section twenty-eight of the Marriage Ordinance, 1901, or in any Ordinance No. 25 of 1901. amending the said Ordinance.

7. *Marriage under Marriage Ordinance, 1901.*—Where an Asiatic desires to be married by a Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar under the Marriage Ordinance, 1901, such Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar shall be subject to the provisions of section five of this Ordinance save that in the case of marriage by banns, the Marriage Officer may give notice of the intended marriage by the publication of banns.

8. *Making and decision of objection to proposed marriage.*—(1) Any person who desires to make objection to an intended marriage, of which notice has been given as hereinbefore provided, shall make such objection to the Marriage

Officer or Superintendent Registrar before the expiration of the period of three weeks mentioned in sub-section (2) of section five of this Ordinance.

(2) If any such objection is made, the Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar shall immediately report the matter to the Immigration Agent General who shall fix a day for the hearing of such objection and shall cause notice thereof to be given to the parties to the intended marriage; and at such hearing the onus of proof shall rest upon the person making the objection to prove the existence of the alleged impediment to the marriage. Should the Immigration Agent General consider that the objection has not been established he shall issue to the Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar a certificate to this effect and the Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar may thereupon proceed to perform the marriage. If the Immigration Agent General shall allow the objection he shall certify the fact to the said Marriage Officer or to the Superintendent Registrar who shall thereupon return to the Immigration Agent General the certificate mentioned in sub-section (1) of section five, or in section seven of this Ordinance and the Immigration Agent General shall destroy the said certificate.

(3) If any party to an objection is dissatisfied with the decision of the Immigration Agent General he shall immediately upon the decision being pronounced give notice to the Immigration Agent General of his dissatisfaction and shall within one month thereafter apply to the Chief Justice to have the decision reviewed. After the said notice has been given the Immigration Agent General shall not certify his decision on any objection unless the party giving the notice has not made application for review of the decision within the said period of one month.

9. *Grounds of objection to proposed marriage.*—No objection shall be allowed to any marriage proposed to be contracted under this Ordinance unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Immigration Agent General that either of the parties thereto has a wife or a husband still living; or that the parties stand in any of the degrees of relationship within which it is hereinbefore declared to be unlawful for persons to celebrate marriage, or, in the case of a male, that he is under fifteen years of age, or in the case of a female, that she is under thirteen years of age, or, if she is under fifteen years of age, that the consent mentioned in sub-sections (2) of section five of this Ordinance has not been obtained.

10. *Penalty.*—Every Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar, who offends against the provisions of section five of this Ordinance shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty-eight dollars; provided that no complaint shall be brought for the recovery of any such penalty without the sanction in writing of the Immigration Agent General.

11. *Certificates when void.*—No marriage shall be celebrated under this Ordinance after the expiration of three months from the date of the certificate issued by the Immigration Agent General either under sub-section (1) of section five or under section seven, or after the expiration of two months either from the date of the certificate of the Immigration Agent General under sub-section (3) of section eight that an objection to a marriage has not been estab-

lished, or from the date of an order of the Chief Justice dismissing an application for review of any such decision as mentioned in sub-section (3) of section eight.

DIVORCE.

12. (1) *Proceedings for divorce of Asiatics.*—Where Asiatics are married and one of them is guilty of misconduct entitling the other to dissolution of the marriage, it shall be lawful for the spouse so entitled to apply to a Magistrate for an order dissolving the marriage.

(2) The Magistrate shall, on receiving any such application, summon before him the parties, and such witnesses as they may desire to be examined, and any persons whom the Magistrate may think it expedient to examine, and the Magistrate shall reduce the statements on oath of the parties and the witnesses into writing, and shall transmit such . . . to the Registrar in order that they may be laid before . . . his decision.

(3) On such application and statements being laid before him, if it appears that the party applying is entitled to a dissolution of the marriage, the Chief Justice may deal with the application in a summary way and may make an order dissolving the marriage.

(4) The Chief Justice may require the Magistrate to take further evidence on the application and transmit the same to the Registrar, or may require the parties to appear before him and produce such evidence as may be necessary.

(5) On any such application and statements being laid before him, the Chief Justice shall have the same powers as the Supreme Court would have in a suit in the said Court for the dissolution of marriage and may make any such order, on such terms and conditions, as the said Court might make in such a suit.

(6) Every order dissolving a marriage made under this section shall have the same incidents and the same effect as a judgment of the said Court.

(7) The fee payable in respect of any such proceedings shall be the sum of twenty-four dollars, and such fee shall include all charges in the Office of the Registrar.

(8) The said fee shall be payable on making the application to the Magistrate: Provided that nothing in this section shall affect the right of any person to apply to be allowed to sue *in forma pauperis*.

(9) The provisions of this section shall apply to marriages contracted or registered under the provisions of Ordinance No. 10 of 1860 or of Part X of the Immigration Ordinance, 1891, or of this Ordinance.

No. 18 of 1891.

13. *Keeping of Register of Divorces of Asiatics.*—Immediately on the making of an order under the last preceding section, the Registrar shall transmit a copy thereof to the Immigration Agent General who shall cause it to be entered in a Register of Divorces of Asiatics to be kept by him.

Schedule Form No. 5.

OFFENCES.

14. *Punishment of person making false entry in register.*—Every person who knowingly and wilfully inserts, or causes or permits to be inserted, in any register kept under this Ordinance any false entry of any matter relating to any marriage or to any dissolution of marriage shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

15. *Punishment of person signing false declaration or certificate.*—Every person who makes, signs, or attests any declaration or certificate by this Ordinance required or authorized to be made or given containing a statement which is false, and which he either knows or believes to be false or does not believe to be true, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

16. *Punishment of person forging certificate.*—Every person who forges or alters in any material particular, or offers, utters, disposes of, or puts off knowing the same to be forged or altered in any material particular, any certificate by this Ordinance required or authorised to be given, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROVISIONS.

17. *Proof of marriage or divorce.*—An entry whether purporting to be an original entry or not, in any register kept under this Ordinance shall be conclusive evidence until the contrary is proved of the marriage or dissolution of the marriage of the parties to whom the entry relates and also of the date of a marriage or of an order dissolving a marriage, if the same is specified in the entry: Provided always that the Immigration Agent General may correct any entry which he is satisfied from facts within his own knowledge is an error.

18. (1) *Use as evidence of entry in register and of certificate.*—Where any entry is by this Ordinance required to be made in any register, *prima facie* evidence may be given of such entry in any Court of Justice and in any legal proceeding by production of an extract purporting to be certified by the Immigration Agent General to be a true copy of such entry.

(2) Where any certificate is by this Ordinance required or authorized to be given, *prima facie* evidence of such certificate may be given in any Court of Justice and in any legal proceeding by production of a certificate apparently in accordance with this Ordinance and purporting to be signed as required by this Ordinance.

(3) No proof shall be required of the handwriting or official position of the person signing any such certificate.

(4) Every certificate given under this Ordinance shall be *prima facie* evidence of any fact therein certified.

(5) The provisions of this section shall be deemed to be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any powers of proof under any existing law.

19. *Cost on appeal from a decision of Immigration Agent General.*—Where application has been made to the Chief Justice to review the decision of the Immigration Agent General on an objection to a marriage the Chief Justice shall make such order as to the objection and costs as may seem just.

20. *Appeal where registration is refused.*—If the Immigration Agent General refuses to register a marriage or any order dissolving a marriage under this Ordinance, any person aggrieved by such refusal may apply to the Chief Justice to have such registration made, and on such application, if it appears that the registration ought to be made, the Chief Justice shall order the Immigration Agent General to make such registration, and may make such order as to costs as may seem just.

21. *Cancellation of registration.*—Where registration under this Ordinance has been made of any marriage or any order dissolving a marriage, any person aggrieved by such registration may apply to the Chief Justice to have such registration cancelled, and on such application, if it appears that the registration ought not to have been made, the Chief Justice shall order the Immigration Agent General to cancel such registration, and may make such order as to costs as may seem just.

22. (1) *Procedure on application to the Chief Justice.*—Any application to the Chief Justice under this Ordinance and the subsequent proceedings thereupon shall be as prescribed by any general orders made by the Chief Justice under this Ordinance, or if no orders are made and subject to such orders, if any, the application shall be by motion, and the subsequent proceedings shall be in accordance with the usual practice of the Supreme Court on motions.

(2) All general orders made by the Chief Justice under this section shall be published in the *Gazette*.

(3) In all proceedings before the Chief Justice in regard to any marriage or divorce of Asiatics the Immigration Agent General shall have the right to appear by counsel for the purpose of any application which he may see fit to make.

(4) The production of a copy of the *Gazette* purporting to contain any such orders shall be *prima facie* evidence of the due making and tenor of such orders.

23. *Right of appeal from Magistrate's order.*—Every order of a Magistrate made under this Ordinance shall be subject to the review provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Ordinances.

See Ordinance No. 13 of 1893.

24. *Furnishing of certified copy of entry in register.*—It shall be lawful for any person, on the production of a receipt for the sum of one dollar from the Colonial Treasurer's Office, to have a true copy, certified under the hand of the Immigration Agent General, of any entry made in any register kept under

this Ordinance: Provided that the public officer shall not be required to pay for any such certified copy required by him in his capacity as such public officer.

25. *Penalty on unauthorized person performing marriage.*—If any person who is not a Marriage Officer under this Ordinance, or a Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar under the Marriage Ordinance, 1901, shall celebrate a marriage between Asiatics, or if any person who is not a Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar under the Marriage Ordinance, 1901, shall celebrate a

No. 25 of 1901. marriage between an Asiatic and a person who is not an Asiatic, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment; provided that where an Asiatic other than a Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar performs a ceremony between Asiatics purporting to be a marriage according to any usage of Asiatics, and at the time of the ceremony he informs both the parties thereto that the ceremony does not constitute a legal marriage, such Asiatic shall not be guilty of an offence under this section.

26. (1) *General law of Colony.*—Save as herein provided every marriage contracted or registered under this Ordinance shall be subject to the general law of the Colony in all its incidents in like manner as if it had been celebrated under the Marriage Ordinance, 1901, or under any Ordinance amending that Ordinance.

No. 25 of 1901.

(2) Subject to the provisions of section nine hereof nothing herein contained shall be deemed to prevent any Asiatic from contracting a marriage in any manner prescribed by the Marriage Ordinance, 1901.

No. 25 of 1901.

(3) No marriage between an Asiatic and one who is not an Asiatic shall be celebrated under this Ordinance by a Marriage Officer for Asiatics, and no such marriage shall be celebrated until the Marriage Officer or Superintendent Registrar has obtained a certificate from the Immigration Agent General as in section five sub-section (1) provided.

27. *Immigration Agent General may delegate powers.*—The Immigration Agent General may by writing delegate to any Immigration Agent from time to time the exercise or performance of any of his functions or duties hereunder but without diminution of his own responsibility and in the absence of the Immigration Agent General anything which may by law be done or permitted by the Immigration Agent General may be done or permitted by the Senior Immigration Agent.

28. *Repeal of sections 143 to 153, 162, 163 of Ordinance No. 18 of 1891.*—Sections one hundred and forty-three to one hundred and fifty-three both inclusive and sections one hundred and sixty-two and one hundred and sixty-three of the Immigration Ordinance, 1891, are hereby repealed.

29. *Forms.*—The forms in the Schedule hereto shall be used for the purposes of this Ordinance but the Immigration Agent General with the approval

of the Governor-in-Council may make, alter and repeal any forms from time to time.

30. *Commencement.*—This Ordinance shall come into operation on such date as the Governor may fix by Proclamation in the *Gazette*.

SCHEDULE.

FORMS.

FORM NO. 1.

SECTION 3.

Register of Marriages of Asiatics contracted in the Colony.

No.	Date.	Name	Country.	No., Ship, and Year of Arrival or No., and Year in Birth or Creole register.	Place of Abode.	Place of Publication of Notice, if any.	Date and Place of Marriage.	Name of Officer before whom Marriage contracted.	Signature of Immi- gration Agent General.

FORM NO. 2.

SECTION 5 (1).

CERTIFICATE.

Under Section 5 (1) of the Asiatic Marriage and Divorce Ordinance, 1922.

I hereby certify that there does not appear from the records of the Immigration Department to be any impediment to the intended marriage of

.....

.....

and

.....

.....

Immigration Agent General.

IMMIGRATION OFFICE,

Georgetown;

SECTION 5 (2).

FORM No. 3.

Notice of Intention to Contract Marriage.

We, who are hereunder named and described, do hereby give notice of our intention to contract marriage, and do declare that, to the best of our belief, no impediment exists to such marriage, and (if the female is under 15 years of age) that the consent of the Father [or as the case may be, of] has been obtained.

Name.	Age.	Country.	No., Ship, and Year of Arrival. Or No. and year in Birth or Creole register.	Place of Abode.

Dated this day of 1

Witnesses to signature :—

(Signed)

E. F.

A. B.

G. H.

C. D.

If the female is under 15 years of age the following declaration must be added :—

I, Father [or as the case may be] of do hereby signify my consent to the marriage of the said to

Dated this day of 1

(Signed)

I. J.

SECTION 5 (4) AND (5).

FORM No. 4.

Certificate of Marriage after Publication of Notice.

I hereby certify that the Asiatics hereunder named and described have been duly married before me in accordance with the provisions of the Asiatics Marriage Ordinance, 1922.

Name.	Country.	No., Ship, and Year of Arrival. Or No. and year in Birth or Creole register.	Place of Abode.	Place of Publication of Notice.	Date and Place of Marriage.

Dated this day of 1

Marriage Officer for Asiatics.

We, *A. B.* and *C. D.*, severally declare as follows :—

We were duly married on the day of 1 , at
by and we severally say that such marriage was well and truly
effected on the day of

(Signed.)

A. B.

C. D.

We, *E. F.* and *G. H.*, severally declare that we were present at the ceremony of marriage between *A. B.* and *C. D.*; and that the statements contained in this certificate are true.

Dated this day of 1

(Signed.)

E. F.

G. H.

If the female is under 15 years of age, the following declaration must be added :—

I, father [or as the case may be] of do hereby declare
that I consent to the marriage of the said to

Dated this day of 1

(Signed.)

I. J.

FORM No. 5.

SECTION 13.

Register of Divorces of Asiatics.

No.	Date.	Name.	Country.	No., Ship, and Year of Arrival. Or No. and year in Birth or Creole register.	Date of Marriage.	No. of Divorce.	Date of Divorce.

MS.E.111

APPENDIX XIV.

Marriage Law.

In addition to the General Marriage Law of the Colony, further provision is made for Immigrants in Part X of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891, copies of which have been supplied.

2. Under this latter provision the Immigration Agent General keeps a Register of Immigrants found to be married at the time of their arrival, these marriages including those of spouses who arrive in separate ships, as well as a Register of Marriages contracted in the Colony.

3. Under Part X immigrants may be married by :—

Magistrate

Christian Minister or

Priest of own religion.

4. In all cases a certificate from the Immigration Department is required showing that there is no impediment to the union ; but in the case of marriage by Priest of Own Religion only does the failure to obtain beforehand such a certificate invalidate the marriage. With a view to removing this anomaly and also of making uniform the civil requirements in all three cases, Part X of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891 has been reviewed and simplified into a separate Marriage Ordinance for Asiatics, but its terms are still under consideration, and it has been held over for discussion with the members of the Delegation from India now in the Colony.

5. Immigrants hitherto have in many cases taken advantage of the anomaly above referred to in order that their marriages may be illegal although reputable and celebrated with all the ceremony of their religions.

6. Except for the omission to obtain the certificate there was nothing contrary to the law in many of these marriages, and to get the certificate presented not the slightest difficulty. One of the reasons for resort to this expedient lies possibly in the fear of complications in connexion with return to India ; the husband may not desire to take the wife to his people in India ; the wife may not desire to go to a strange land or to return with such a spouse to the land she remembers or to the land whose customs have grown strange and irksome to her ; the consequence may be the demand by one of compensation from the other, or other difficulties.

7. With regard to the certificate described in paragraph 4, the observations of an experienced member of the community who has been intimately associated with East Indian life and sentiments in British Guiana for a score of years are as follows :—

“ It is required among existing provisions that as a preliminary to marriage procedure a certificate be had from the Immigration Agent General attesting that so far as the records of the Department show no impediment exists to the proposed marriage ;

and it is also required that a certificate be sent to the Immigration Agent when the marriage has been solemnised or celebrated at testing this fact.

The importance and value of this certificate cannot be over-estimated. No publication of banns or affixing of notices at Magistrates' Courts or other means of giving publicity can take its place. While the members of a small fraction of the East Indian Community are sufficiently widely known to make such a provision unnecessary, the great bulk of the people are absolutely beyond effective reach by the means employed in connection with the general population. The identity of names and the absence to a considerable extent, of family relationships renders difficult and uncertain the tracing of individuals. The constant addition of strangers to the Community, the absence of conditions as exist in India—the village life, the public opinion (Custom, Caste, etc.)—make it essential that there should be a central source of information and that this source should be consulted. The records of your (the Immigration) Department will bear me out in this, that every year among the applications made for this certificate of non-impediment are more cases than one in which one or other or both of the parties have been married and there is no record of the death of any. I am certain from my own knowledge that in many, if not in all, of these cases the marriages would have been solemnised but for the information preserved in the Department and furnished. Many and various excuses were, of course, made by the parties when confronted by the facts.

I fully appreciate the desire to free the marriage procedure among the East Indians from all unnecessary encumbrances. But care must be taken not to break down necessary safeguards; and the provision under reference I regard as very necessary.

It is a detail whether the parties to the intended marriage or the solemnising or celebrating officer should obtain this certificate; and if it is deemed an effort for the former, make it incumbent on the latter to secure it. It is very easily obtained and need not cause either delay or inconvenience in the getting of it.

It is sometimes argued that restrictions on the East Indians in connection, especially, with marriage make an invidious distinction between him and the other members of the general community. Is it not the case that distinctions as between the East Indian and the ordinary member of the community abound? It is recognised that special treatment is still necessary for the community (the East Indian community) as a whole; and it will be found very difficult to make distinction within this community itself. I deem it wiser to preserve the East Indian Community as a united whole than to encourage its being reft

into sections, one remaining East Indian the other merging itself into the general community."

8. The effect of an illegal marriage is of course that children of such a marriage are illegal and in some cases may fail to inherit property of their parents. On the other hand this disability disappears if such parents are careful to make Wills and is to some extent obviated by petition to the Governor respecting escheat; while at the same time latitude is afforded the immigrants in the observance of their own usages without the complexity (to mention one alternative) of separate laws for the divers races of this community.

9. In this connexion the following conclusions drawn from the source referred to in paragraph 7 should be noted :—

"The impression prevails that the great mass of the children of the East Indians of the Colony who are classed as illegitimate should be regarded as legitimate; it being presumed that they are the offspring of parents who have been duly married in accordance with the rites of their own religion. This impression is the foundation of the widespread desire to bring these ceremonies within the pale of law. Unfortunately this impression is not correct. It is a fact that the parents—very many of them—of the children in question have passed through a marriage ceremony, but not with each other; and the children are not the fruit of that ceremony. Far and away the majority of the boys and girls and the very young men and women who are married according to the rites colloquially described as "Bamboo Marriage" separate from each other and, later in life, form connexions of their own choice. The great bulk of the children born are the children of this subsequent connexion.

This is no mere conjecture on my part. It is a conviction deliberately formed after 20 years of experience among the East Indians of this Colony; and in it I am supported by my fellow missionaries, all the native members of the Mission staff and intelligent East Indians of every caste whose opinions I have sought.

Accurate judgment in this matter is essential to a consideration of any remedial measure.

In the first place no recognition can be given to the marriage of children below a standard age no matter what the religious ceremony may be or what the religious persuasion of the parties.

In the next place the wisdom of disturbing the present situation is very questionable. The fact—for it is a fact—that so very many of the young people coupled in "Bamboo Fashion" do not remain attached to each other is evidence that the connections are not happy. There being no legal bond these parties may and many frequently do make legal the connections, which subsequently they form of their own choosing. If the earlier connections were

invariably made legally binding, there would be no loss of separation ; but the parties would be debarred from the opportunity of contracting a lawful marriage ; and adultery in gross and flagrant form would be fostered. The remedy would be far worse than the malady. It is the desire of many Pandits that the young people once married should be compelled to abide with each other. They would effect by law what public opinion—"Custom"—has maintained in India for centuries. But they are factors in the situation of which these men do not take account. It is impossible to *force* upon the generation of to-day the thoughts and habits of the past centuries. They live in the West and breathe the atmosphere ; and among other lessons they learn that of choosing their own partners in life. At the early age at which their marriages are celebrated—even the legal age—the young peoples' minds are hardly formed ; and they are seldom fit to exercise a wise judgment in a choice of such far reaching effect. Besides, the circumstances under which the marriages are brought about afford them no opportunity to make a choice. Sometimes the semblance of opportunity is afforded ; but it amounts to nothing. However well intentioned, it will be a retrograde step and a cruel injustice to the youth of India in this Colony to bring any pressure to bear to a greater extent than now obtains. It is on the other hand just that facilities should be provided whereby those who desire it may follow the customs of their fore fathers. Provision for this exists in the law as it now stands and it is wisely hedged about with such precautions as are necessary for the justification of the unwary and the ill-informed."

10. Provision is made for the protection of wives in section 157 *et seq.*, for the protection of spouses' property in section 154 ; for the punishment of persons who entice, cohabit with or unlawfully harbour wives of immigrants, in section 160 ; for divorce, in section 162, and for the division of property, when couples cease to live together, whether they are legally married or otherwise, and without resort to divorce under the law, in section 156.

11. There is no record of the number of marriages of the sort referred to in paragraph 5, but the following is a return of the number of legal marriages for the last ten years :—

APPENDIX XV.

Number of authorised marriages.—(1912—1921).

Year.			Registered on arrival. Section 141.	By Magis- trate. Section 140.	By Clergy- man. Section 150.	By own priest Section 151.	Total.
1921	..	..	..	177	137	24	338
1920	..	..	..	193	181	47	421
1919	..	..	..	225	166	50	441
1918	..	..	..	153	184	28	365
1917	..	..	81	139	141	12	373
1916	..	..	94	108	114	16	362
1915 (9 months)	..	..	109	88	104	9	310
1914-15	..	..	75	125	108	19	327
1913-14	..	..	95	142	101	18	359
1912-13	..	..	163	162	100	6	431
Total	..	..	617	1,512	1,369	229	3,727

22nd March 1922.

R. P. STEWART,
Acting Immigration Agent General.

APPENDIX XVI.

PART X OF THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE.

Marriage, Divorce, etc.

139. *Interpretation of term "immigrant" in Part X.*—In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires, the term "Immigrant" means any person introduced or coming into this Colony from Asia, whether directly or indirectly, and whether wholly or in part at the expense of the Immigration Fund or otherwise, and includes any descendant of such a person.

Marriage.

140 (1) *Keeping of Register of Married Immigrants arriving in Colony.*—The Immigration Agent General shall keep a Register of Immigrants who may be found to be married at the time of their arrival in this Colony.

(2) In such register the number of any registration shall be the same for the husband and the wife, and shall be continued in regular sequence.
Schedule: Form No. 26.

141 (1) *Registration of married immigrants on arrival.*—When any ship with any immigrants on board arrives in this Colony, the Immigration Agent General shall inquire whether any of such immigrants stand in the relation of husband and wife to each other; and if he is satisfied, by the statements of the parties themselves and by such other information as he may be able to procure, that the parties ought to be regarded and dealt with as husband and wife, he shall thereupon cause an entry to be made accordingly in the register mentioned in the last preceding section.

(2) The Immigration Agent General shall at the the same time deliver Schedule: Form No. 27. to each of the parties a certificate of marriage.

(3) The persons so registered as husband and wife shall be deemed to be married, unless it is shown that the parties are so nearly related by blood that a marriage between them was unlawful.

(4) The provisions of this and the last preceding section shall apply with the necessary modifications, to the case of a male immigrant and a female immigrant arriving in this Colony in different ships and alleging that they were married before their arrival.

142. *Exemption from fee for registration.*—No fee shall be payable for the registration of any marriage under the provisions of the last preceding section or for any certificate granted thereunder.

143 (1) *Keeping of Register of Marriages of Immigrants contracted in the Colony.*—The Immigration Agent General shall keep a Register of Marriages of Immigrants contracted in the Colony.

(2) In such register the number of any registration shall be the same for the husband and the wife, and shall be continued in regular sequence.
Schedule: Form No. 28.

144. *Marriage of Christian immigrants.*—With reference to the marriage of Christian immigrants the following provisions shall have effect:—

- (1) An immigrant who, at the time of his or her arrival in this Colony, professes Christianity shall, immediately upon such arrival; and
- (2) An immigrant who, at any time after his or her arrival in this Colony, is converted to Christianity shall, immediately upon such conversion,

as to capacity or incapacity to contract marriage, and the conditions subject to which, and the manner in which, marriage may be contracted, be subject to the general law of the Colony.

145. *Prohibition of certain marriages.*—No marriage shall be contracted under this Ordinance, or, if so contracted and registered, the same shall be null and void *ab initio*, where it is shown that either of the parties has, or had at the time of such contracting and registration, a wife or husband alive, or where either party is directly descended from the other, or where the female is a sister of the male, either by the full or the half-blood, or where the male is a brother of the female, either by the full or the half-blood.

146 (1) *Notification of intended marriage.*—Where a male immigrant, not being under fifteen years of age, and a female immigrant, not being under thirteen years of age, wish to contract a marriage, they may signify such wish to the Magistrate of the District in which they reside.

(2) The Magistrate shall thereupon call upon the parties to produce a certificate, signed by the Immigration Agent General to the effect that there does not appear from the records of the Immigration Department to be any impediment to the intended marriage.

(3) If such certificate is produced, the Magistrate shall call upon the parties to sign a notice, which shall be furnished to them free of charge by the

Schedule: Form No. 29.

Magistrate, and shall contain a declaration by the parties that, to the best of their belief, there exists no lawful impediment to their marriage, and, if the female is under fifteen years of age, that the consent of her father, if alive and in the Colony, or, if he is dead, of her mother, if alive and in the Colony, or, if her father and mother are both dead or absent from the Colony, of the Immigration Agent General, has been obtained.

(4) The Magistrate shall thereupon give public notice of the intended marriage by posting up the notice for three weeks in a conspicuous place at the Court House nearest to the place of residence of the parties or of one of them, and by publicly reading the same upon each day during the said three weeks upon which he holds a Court at such Court House: Provided that, if such Court is held more than once a week, it shall be sufficient if the notice is read on one day during each of the said three weeks.

(5) If the parties reside in different Judicial Districts the proceedings mentioned in this section shall be taken in each District.

147. *Grounds of objection to proposed marriage.*—No objection shall be admitted to any marriage proposed to be contracted under this Ordinance unless it is shown, to the satisfaction of the Magistrate, that either of the parties thereto has a wife or a husband still living; or that the parties stand in any of the degrees of relationship within which it is hereinbefore declared to be unlawful for persons to celebrate marriage; or, in the case of a male, that he is under fifteen years of age, or, in the case of a female, that she is under thirteen years of age, or, if she is under fifteen years of age, that the consent mentioned in the last preceding section has not been obtained.

148 (1). *Making and decision of objection to proposed marriage.*—Any person who desires to make objection to an intended marriage, of which notice has been given as hereinbefore provided, must make such objection to the Magistrate before the expiration of the aforesaid period of three weeks.

(2) If any such objection is made, the Magistrate shall, immediately on the expiration of the said period of three weeks, fix a day for the hearing of such objection, and shall cause notice thereof to be given to the parties who have given the notice of marriage; and at such hearing the person making the objection shall be bound to prove the existence of the alleged impediment to the marriage.

(3) If either party makes application for a review of the decision on such objection, the Magistrate shall defer the granting of any certificate as herein-after mentioned until such review has been disposed of in due course of law.

149. (1) *Marriage after publication of notice.*—Within six months after such publication has been made, and not afterwards, and if no valid objection is pending or has been allowed to the intended marriage, the parties may appear before the Magistrate or either of the two Magistrates in whose Districts publication has been made, as the case may be, and the Magistrate shall, on being satisfied of their identity and that publication of notice of their intended marriage has been duly made, declare the parties to be husband and wife, and shall deliver to each of them a certificate of marriage.

Schedule: Form No. 30.

(2) Within twenty-four hours after delivering such certificate, the Magistrate shall transmit a copy thereof to the Immigration Agent General, and, in default of his so doing, he shall be liable, on the complaint of the Immigration Agent General, to a penalty not exceeding forty-eight dollars.

(3) On receipt of the copy of such certificate, the Immigration Agent General shall cause an entry of the marriage to be made in the Register of Marriages of immigrants contracted in the Colony.

150. (1) *Marriage after publication of banns.*—Where an immigrant desires to be married by a Minister of the Christian Religion after publication of banns, he or she shall cause to be delivered to the Minister a certificate, signed by the Immigration Agent General, to the effect that there does not appear from the records of the Immigration Department to be any impediment to the intended marriage, and the Minister shall not publish the banns until he receives the certificate.

(2) The Minister shall retain the certificate and shall, within twenty-four hours after the marriage has been solemnized, endorse on the certificate the date and place of marriage, with his signature thereto, and forward the same to the Immigration Agent General.

(3) Every Minister who offends against the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty-eight dollars: provided that no complaint shall be brought for the recovery of any such penalty without the sanction in writing of the Immigration Agent General.

151. (1) *Marriage according to religion and personal law.*—A marriage contracted after the commencement of this Ordinance between a male immigrant, not being under fifteen years of age at the date of the marriage, and a female immigrant, not being under thirteen years of age at the date of the marriage, both of whom, at the date of the marriage, are free from any disability mentioned in section 145, profess the same religion, not being the Christian Religion, and are subject to the same personal law, shall, if contracted according to the religion and personal law of such immigrants and registered under this Ordinance, be deemed to be valid as from the date of such marriage: Provided that, before any such marriage is contracted, the parties thereto shall first obtain a certificate, signed by the Immigration Agent General, to the effect that there does not appear from the records of the Immigration Department to be any impediment to the intended marriage; and no such marriage shall be deemed to have been duly contracted unless such certificate has been first obtained.

(2) If the marriage referred to in any such certificate is not contracted within three months from the date of the certificate, the certificate shall, on the expiration of the said period, become null and void.

152. (1) *Registration of marriage contracted according to religion and personal law.*—Within seven days after the celebration of a marriage contracted according to religion and personal law, the parties to such marriage, or one of them, shall deliver to the Immigration Agent for the District in which they reside a certificate thereof.

(2) If default is made in delivering such certificate within the time aforesaid, each of the parties to the marriage shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty-four dollars
Schedule: Form No. 31.

(3) The Immigration Agent shall forthwith transmit such certificate to the Immigration Agent General.

(4) On receipt of such certificate, whether within the time aforesaid or otherwise, and on satisfying himself—

(a) that the requirements of the last preceding section have been complied with; and

(b) that, in the case of a female under fifteen years of age, the person acting as guardian was entitled so to act,

the Immigration Agent General shall cause an entry of the marriage, with the particulars of such entry, to be made in the

Register of Marriages contracted in the Colony, and shall forthwith transmit to each of the parties a certificate of such registration.

Form No. 32.

153. Whenever the Immigration Agent General issues a certificate under section 151 and does not, within three months and seven days thereafter, receive from or on account of the parties mentioned therein, or one of them the certificate mentioned in the last preceding section, it shall be his duty to make inquiry into the matter, and, if necessary, to make a complaint against the parties who have made default in respect of such last-mentioned certificate.

Property of Married Immigrants.

151 (1) *Protection of property of woman deserted by her husband.*—If any female immigrant is deserted by her husband, being an immigrant, the Magistrate of the District in which she resides shall, on application made by her or on her behalf, and on being satisfied of the fact of such desertion, and that the same was without reasonable cause, and that the woman is maintaining herself by her own industry or property, give to the woman an order protecting her earnings and property acquired since the commencement of such desertion from her husband and from all creditors and persons claiming under him, and such earnings and property shall belong to the wife as if she were a single woman.

(2) The Magistrate shall cause a notice of every such order to be posted up for fifteen days in a conspicuous place at the Court House nearest the place in which such woman resides, and the husband or any person claiming under him may, during such fifteen days, apply to the Magistrate to annul the order.

(3) If any such application is made, the Magistrate shall hear the same and shall make such order thereon as may be just.

155 (1) *Protection of property of man deserted by his wife.*—If any female immigrant deserts her husband, being an immigrant, and cohabits with another man, the Magistrate of the District in which the husband resides shall, on application made to him by or on behalf of the husband, summon the woman and the alleged adulterer before him, and, on being satisfied of the fact of such desertion and cohabitation, give to the husband an order protecting his earnings and property acquired since the commencement of such desertion from his wife and from all creditors and persons claiming under her, and such earnings and property shall belong to the husband as if he were a single man.

(2) The woman shall forfeit, from the date of such order, all movable property given to her by her husband, and shall further forfeit all right to the community of property resulting from her marriage, and the husband shall not be liable for any debt which she may contract during such desertion; Provided that, if such desertion is afterwards condoned by the husband, any order made under the provisions of this section shall thereupon *ipso facto*

become annulled, and the community of property shall take effect and subsist anew from the date of such condonation.

156 (1) *Division of property of married immigrants.*—Where a male immigrant and a female immigrant who are married to each other, or who have cohabited together, cease to cohabit, and either of them desires that the property to which they or either of them are or is entitled should be divided, it shall be lawful for the Magistrate of the District in which such immigrants or either of them may reside, on application made to him by or on behalf of either of such immigrants, to summon such immigrants before him and any witnesses they or either of them may desire to be examined and to make such order for the division of the property as may be just

(2) Any person, being a party to such proceedings, who refuses or neglects to comply with the terms of such order shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding one month

(3) If, after the making of any such order, any such person refuses or neglects to comply with the terms thereof, the refusal or neglect to comply therewith for a period of seven days shall be deemed a fresh offence, and so on *toties quoties*.

(4) When a male and female immigrant have cohabited together, without having been married, and one of them dies intestate during the period of cohabitation, and the estate of the one so dying is administered by the Official Receiver under the provisions of the Immigration Ordinance 1891, Amendment Ordinance 1905, it shall be lawful for the Official Receiver to assign to the survivor for his or her absolute use and benefit such share, not exceeding one half of all the property, movable and immovable, belonging to the estate of the deceased immigrant which has been acquired by their joint earnings, or to the acquisition of which the survivor has contributed, as, after due inquiry and consideration, may appear just

(5) Every decision under the last preceding sub-section shall be final, and the Immigration Agent General or the Official Receiver, as the case may be, shall have full power and authority to do all things necessary, including the power to transport immovable property, for placing such survivor in possession of the share of such property so assigned.

Protection of Wives of Immigrants, etc.

157 (1) *Apprehension and punishment of male immigrant threatening his wife.*—Where any male immigrant threatens to murder, wound, beat or ill-treat his wife or any woman with whom he may have cohabited or may desire to cohabit, a Magistrate or Justice of the Peace shall on being informed thereof and on being satisfied that there is reason to apprehend that bodily injury may be inflicted on such woman, forthwith issue his warrant for the apprehension of the immigrant alleged to have used such threats

(2) Any immigrant who uses any such threats may be forthwith arrested by any police or rural constable, and may be detained in custody until a warrant can be obtained for his apprehension.

(3) Every immigrant who uses any such threats shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding one month, and, on a second or any subsequent conviction to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding six months.

158 (1) *Transfer of immigrant in case of danger from jealousy.*—Where it is proved, to the satisfaction of a Magistrate that there is reason to apprehend that an immigrant on a plantation may, from motives of jealousy, inflict bodily injury on any woman, and that it is expedient, on account of such jealousy, to remove from any plantation any immigrant under indenture on such plantation, it shall be lawful for the Magistrate to direct that such last-mentioned immigrant shall be removed to some other plantation, and that the indenture shall be transferred.

(2) Every immigrant so ordered to be removed may be detained in custody until his transfer to some other plantation.

159 (1) *Proceedings where injury to woman is apprehended.*—Where a Magistrate is informed, or where in any proceeding whatever it appears to a Magistrate, that there is reason to apprehend that any immigrant may inflict bodily injury on any woman, the Magistrate may, if he thinks fit, forthwith issue his warrant for the apprehension of such immigrant, and shall, whether he issues such warrant or not, make full investigation as to the circumstances of the case.

(2) The Magistrate may order any such immigrant to be detained in custody until the Immigration Agent General can take such action as may be necessary.

(3) The Immigration Agent General may at any time, for the reason above-mentioned and whether after or without any proceeding taken by a Magistrate, order any indentured immigrant to be removed from a plantation, and any such order shall be deemed to authorize the detention in custody of the immigrant until he can be removed and his removal in custody: Provided that no immigrant shall be detained under this section for more than fourteen days.

160. *Punishment of person enticing away wife of immigrant, etc.*—Every person who entices away or cohabits with the wife of an immigrant or who unlawfully harbours the wife of an immigrant who has left her husband without just cause, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty-four dollars or to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding three months, or to both such penalty and imprisonment, and, on a second or any subsequent offence, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and be punishable accordingly: Provided that no person shall be convicted under this section for cohabiting with the wife of an immigrant if he establishes, to the satisfaction of the Magistrate or Court before whom he is tried, that the wife was deserted by her husband, or that the husband compelled her to leave his house, or that such cohabitation was with the knowledge and consent of the husband.

161. *Copy of proceedings for the Immigration Agent General.*—In any case arising under either of the last four preceding sections the Magistrate shall, as soon as the proceedings are concluded, or sooner if he thinks fit, transmit a copy thereof to the Immigration Agent General, who shall thereupon take such action as the circumstances of the case may allow and require.

Divorce.

162. (1) *Proceedings for divorce of immigrants.*—Where immigrants are married and one of them is guilty of misconduct entitling the other to a divorce, it shall be lawful for the spouse so entitled to a divorce to apply to a Magistrate for an order dissolving the marriage.

(2) The Magistrate shall, on receiving any such application, summon before him the parties, and such witnesses as they may desire to be examined, and any persons whom the Magistrate may think it expedient to examine, and the Magistrate shall reduce the statements on oath of the parties and the witnesses into writing, and shall transmit such application and statements to the Registrar of British Guiana, in order that they may be laid before the Chief Justice for his decision.

(3) On such application and statements being laid before him, if it appears that the party applying for divorce is entitled thereto, the Chief Justice may, deal with the application in a summary way and may make an order dissolving the marriage.

(4) The Chief Justice may require the Magistrate to take further evidence on the application and transmit the same to the Registrar, or may require the parties to appear before him and produce such evidence as may be necessary.

(5) On any such application and statements being laid before him, the Chief Justice shall have the same powers as the Supreme Court in its civil jurisdiction would have in an action in the said Court for the dissolution of the said marriage, and may make any such order, on the same terms and with the same conditions, as the said Court might have made.

(6) Every order dissolving a marriage made under this section shall have the same incidents and the same effect as a judgment of the said Court.

(7) The fee payable in respect of any such proceedings shall be the sum of twenty-four dollars, and such fee shall include all charges in the Office of the Registrar.

(8) The said fee shall be payable on making the application to the Magistrate: Provided that nothing in this section shall affect the right of any person to apply to be allowed to sue *in forma pauperis*.

(9) The provisions of this section shall only apply to marriages contracted or registered under the provisions of Ordinance No. 10 of 1860 or of this Ordinance.

163. *Keeping of Register of Divorces of Immigrants.*—Immediately on the making of an order under the last preceding section, the Registrar shall transmit a copy thereof to
Schedule: Form No. 33.

the Immigration Agent General, who shall cause it to be entered in a Register of Divorces of Immigrants to be kept by him.

. *Offences.*

164. *Punishment of person making false entry in register.*—Every person who knowingly and wilfully inserts, or causes or permits to be inserted, in any register kept under this Part any false entry of any matter relating to any marriage or divorce shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

165. *Punishment of person signing false declaration or certificate.*—Every person who makes, signs, or attests any declaration or certificate by this Part required or authorized to be made or given containing a statement which is false, and which he either knows or believes to be false or does not believe to be true, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

166. *Punishment of person forging certificate.*—Every person who forges or alters in any material particular, or offers, utters, disposes of, or puts off, knowing the same to be forged or altered in any material particular, any certificate by this Part required or authorized to be given, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two years.

Supplemental Provisions.

167. *Proof of marriage or divorce.*—An entry, whether purporting to be an original entry or not, in any register kept under this Part shall be conclusive evidence, until the contrary is proved, of the marriage or divorce of the parties to whom the entry relates, and also of the date of such marriage or divorce, if the same is specified in the entry.

168. (1) *Use as evidence of entry in register and of certificate.*—Where any entry is by this Part required to be made in any register, *prima facie* evidence may be given of such entry in any Court of Justice and in any legal proceeding by production of a writing purporting to be certified by the Immigration Agent General to be a true copy of such entry.

(2) Where any certificate is by this Part required or authorized to be given, *prima facie* evidence of such certificate may be given in any Court of Justice and in any legal proceeding by production of a certificate apparently in accordance with this Part, and purporting to be signed as required by this Part.

(3) No proof shall be required of the handwriting or official position of the person signing any such certificate.

(4) Every certificate given under this Part shall be *prima facie* evidence of any fact therein certified.

(5) The provisions of this section shall be deemed to be in addition to and not in derogation of, any powers of proof under any existing law.

169. *Appeal where registration is refused.*—If the Immigration Agent General refuses to register any marriage or divorce under this Part, any person aggrieved by such refusal may apply by petition to the Chief Justice to have such registration made, and on such application, if it appears that the registration ought to be made, the Chief Justice shall order the Immigration Agent General to make such registration, and may make such order as to costs as may seem just.

170. *Cancellation of registration.*—Where registration under this Ordinance has been made of any marriage or divorce, any person aggrieved by such registration may apply to the Chief Justice to have such registration cancelled, and on such application, if it appears that the registration ought not to have been made, the Chief Justice shall order the Immigration Agent General to cancel such registration, and may make such order as to costs as may seem just.

171. (1) *Procedure on application to the Chief Justice.*—Any application to the Chief Justice under this Part and the subsequent proceedings thereupon shall be as prescribed by any general orders made by the Chief Justice under this Part, or, if no such orders are made and subject to such orders, if any, the application shall be by motion, and the subsequent proceedings shall be in accordance with the usual practice of the Supreme Court on motions.

(2) All general orders made by the Chief Justice under this section shall be published in the Gazette.

(3) The production of a copy of the Gazette purporting to contain any such orders shall be *prima facie* evidence of the due making and tenor of such orders.

172. *Right of appeal from Magistrate's order.*—Every order of a Magistrate made under this Part shall be subject to the review provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Ordinances.

173. *Furnishing of certified copy of entry in register.*—It shall be lawful for any person, on the production of a receipt for the sum of one dollar from the Receiver General's Office, to have a true copy, certified under the hand of the Immigration Agent General, of any entry made in any register kept under this Part: Provided that a public officer shall not be required to pay for any such certified copy required by him in his capacity as such public officer.

174. *Registration of existing marriages contracted according to religion and personal law.*—During a period of twelve months after the commencement of this Ordinance and subject, so far as they can be made applicable, to the provisions of this Part, the Immigration Agent General may register any marriage contracted in this Colony between immigrants according to their religion and personal law before the commencement of this Ordinance; and the provisions of this Part shall, with any necessary modifications, apply to any such marriage so registered in the same manner as if it had been contracted after the commencement of this Ordinance.

APPENDIX XVIII.

Rates of passage money charged by contractors.

Year.				Where full No. of statute adults is carried.	Where No. is or exceeds 500.	Where No. is or exceeds 400 but not 500.	If No. is less than 400 then in lieu.
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£
1889	..	..	..	10 5 0	11 0 0	13 10 0	..
1894	..	..	..	10 5 0	11 0 0	13 7 6	5,350
1899	..	..	..	10 0 0	10 19 6	12 8 9	4,975
1904	..	..	..	9 16 8	11 7 6	13 13 4	5,500

Year.				Where full No. of statute adults is carried.	If No. is or exceeds 700.	If No. is or exceeds 600 but does not amount to 700.	If No. is or exceeds 500 but does not amount to 600.	If less than 550 embark then in lieu.
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£
1911	..	..	..	11 12 6	12 17 2	14 10 0	16 16 0	8,350
1916	..	..	..	16 0 0	17 14 0	19 19 0	20 2 0	11,495
1921	..	..	..	25 0 0	28 14 3	32 13 4	38 4 0	19,100

APPENDIX XIX.

Repatriation Law and Procedure.

The law governing repatriation is found in Part XIII of the Immigration Ordinance 18 of 1891 copies of which amended to date have been furnished to the Delegation.

Immigrants are registered for return passages at the Immigration Offices in the three Counties of the Colony—Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo.

The registrations are in respect of passages to be provided during the year in which they are made. If an immigrant registers for return passage and does not present himself at time of despatch of the return ships of the year in which he has registered, such payments as he may have made are refunded to him on application, and he must register again in the subsequent year which he may choose for repatriation.

The registration of immigrants who have become entitled to a return passage to India either wholly or in part at the expense of the Immigration Fund commences on the 2nd January and under ordinary circumstances continues until the 31st March. Each immigrant is informed at the time of registration as to the ship in which he will probably be embarked.

2. The following show the parties who are entitled to a return passage :—

- (a) All immigrants introduced into the Colony at the expense of the Government or of the Immigration Fund previous to the 1st September 1895 are entitled to be registered free of charge if they have completed a continuous residence of ten years.
- (b) All immigrants introduced at the same expense between the 1st September 1895 and the 30th September 1898, are required to pay a portion of the passage money, viz.—
Males $\frac{1}{2}$, and females $\frac{1}{3}$.
- (c) All immigrants introduced at the same expense after the 1st October 1898 are required to pay the men $\frac{1}{2}$ and the women $\frac{1}{3}$.
- (d) All children born in the Colony are allowed free passages to India, provided their parents are entitled and accompany them.
- (e) Illegitimate children born in the Colony are, as a rule, registered with their putative fathers, free of charge, provided their mothers are dead ; but if their mothers are alive and do not go with them, then the putative father is made to pay for their passage.

Where the father is married and he and his wife have separated he has no legal claim to a free return passage for any children he may have by another woman, even if such woman be dead ; but the case should be reported for the instructions of the Immigration Agent General.

- (f) Orphans are, as a rule, allowed a free passage to India, but all cases should be submitted for the consideration of the Immigra-

tion Agent General. (The term "Orphan" here used means a child who has lost both parents.)

- (g) Grand children (the children of creoles who are accompanying their parents; in fact all children beyond the second generation) are required to pay.
- (h) Creoles and others married to immigrants entitled in their own right to acquire such right through their husbands. This right, however, does not extend to females introduced after the 1st October 1868, who are debarred by the terms of Ordinance 27 of 1900, section 9, sub-section 3 and clause (a). In these cases the husband has married the woman with a full knowledge of the law, and must therefore pay the full cost of the passage.
- (i) In all cases where children are concerned, the Governor has the power, where he thinks it will be for the benefit of the child, to refuse a passage.

3. Registration of passengers, *i.e.*, those who have no rights to return passage, does not commence until the 1st June by which time the clerk in charge should be in a position to say whether there will be accommodation. At the time of registration it must be carefully explained that although the money has been received no passage can be guaranteed. The granting of a passage depends solely on the numbers of those entitled who come up for embarkation.

4. The registration of paupers, *i.e.*, those who are unable to pay their share of the cost of the return passage and cost of clothing and are pronounced permanently incapable of labour, "*la-clar our gar b*" according to the wording of their "agreements," as a rule, does not commence until the 1st June. No application should be received from any pauper unless he produces his certificate of exemption from labour, or satisfactorily accounts for its loss. The order for registration in each case, must be made by the Immigration Agent General, or, in his absence, by the Senior Immigration Agent.

5. Each immigrant who applies to be registered for a return passage either in the ordinary way, or as a pauper or otherwise, must be carefully identified by the Registration Clerk before his name is entered in the Back Passage Register. For this purpose a reference must be made to the information contained in the Original Certificate, and the marks and his height determined by means of the measuring screen. Those registered in Essequibo or Berbice must be identified in the same way on the day after the preliminary muster has been held, an extra day in Depot being allowed for the purpose.

6. When the immigrant has been properly identified, his name and description must be entered in the Back Passage Register, and the B. P. serial number noted on his Certificate of Exemption. He is then made to proceed to the Colonial Receiver's Office and deposit the amount required for warm clothing and the proportion of passage due from him.

On his return to the Immigration Office from the Treasury the receipt he received there is taken from him and a fresh one in the form () handed to him in lieu thereof. He is warned that he must place the receipt in a secure

place, as should it get lost, it will cause him much trouble and some expense, as the same procedure required in the case of lost Savings Bank Books will have to be gone through.

An impress of his left thumb is then placed on the original receipt in the manner laid down in my circular letter No. 3661-2153, dated 31st December 1904, and the receipt itself filed. To enable the Immigration Agent General to notify the Crown Agents of the number of ships required for the season, a book in the form marked () must be kept and written up daily while registration is going on.

7. Early in March the classification up to date is handed to the Immigration Agent General with the numbers registered to the same date of the previous year : and the letter to the Government Secretary with reference to the number of ships which will be required is then drafted.

8. Remittances can be made at any time after the 1st May. Deposits in the names of minors are permitted, but not in those of infants. Only three deposits in any one name can be made, and none after the preliminary muster. Fractional parts of a dollar will not as a rule be taken.

The original receipts for these deposits are dealt with in the same way as those for warm clothing and passage money, even to the thumb prints, but the amount is entered on the Immigration Receipt which was issued in lieu of the original one for warm clothing.

A fresh warning is given as to safeguarding the receipt.

9. A list is made for the " Preliminary Muster " about June, preference being given to the immigrants who have deposited amounts for remittance, or who have signified their intention of leaving by the ship. Experience has shown that the others seldom present themselves for the first ship.

10. The preliminary muster in the Depôt, Georgetown, of immigrants registered for return passage under ordinary circumstances, should be held eight days before the date fixed for the sailing of ship. After all the names on the list have been called over and the classification ascertained, steps should be taken for the identification of the immigrants from Essequibo and Berbice, whose names are included in the list.

11. From the list as amended, the clerk must prepare clean lists for the medical muster. Sirdars, topazes, cooks, etc., should be selected from the immigrants who have presented themselves and lists containing their names and wages prepared.

12. The medical muster should be held two days before the date of embarkation. The people should be mustered, early in the morning, in the upper storcy of the Depôt, ranged off in lines in the order in which their names appear in the lists. The men should have on their dhoties only, and the women should appear with bare heads and feet. All should be warned that when the name of the head of the family is called each member of that family should at once step up before the medical officers for inspection : and that when they are passed, they must without delay go down the back steps and remain in the yard until the inspection has been completed.

During the inspection the clerk in charge will attend at the table, call over the names and mark opposite those to be placed on the "Invalid List" the nature of the disease from which the immigrant is suffering : or, if rejected, the reason for such rejection.

13. After the muster has been held and those who intend to embark inspected, the clerk will draw a blue pencil line through the names in the list of those who have been absent or have been rejected, and will then prepare the Invalid Lists (five in number).

He will also have the classification made out so that no delay may be incurred on the day of embarkation. The invalid list consists of the names of the feeble and ailing.

14. The requisition for the use of the neighbouring Public Works Department stalling and for the attendance of four constables is made at least two days before the date of embarkation.

On the day of embarkation, the clerk must attend at 6 A.M. at the Public Works gate, and if the constables are at their posts, will at once commence calling off the names on the list. It might save time if the people are arranged in the order of their names on the list, but this is not always possible, and may therefore be left to the discretion of the officer in charge.

As the immigrants answer to their names, the clerk in charge, having satisfied himself that no remark has been placed opposite the man's name as to the issue of a duplicate receipt, will take the office receipt and place it on his file, and will then pass him on to the Interpreter, who must question him from his Certificate of Exemption. Having satisfied themselves, they will place the certificate in a basket and send the immigrant on to the steamer.

After all have passed, the clerk will then make out the final classification for the information of the Immigration Officer on board the ship, and will then take both the receipts and the tickets to office and see that they are placed in one of the safes. Subsequently, he must check these with his list of the people placed on board, and then have them burnt.

Lists containing the names and particulars of the immigrants together with the amounts of their remittances, and Treasury receipts for the same, are despatched with the ship for the information of the Emigration Agent, Calcutta, to enable him to make the payments to the immigrants on arrival in Calcutta.

When all other details have been attended to and the Back Passage Register written up, the Serial ship number must be recorded against the name of the immigrant in the Alphabetical Register, as a record of his departure from the Colony.

The return ship is provided in accordance with the "Indian Emigration Act XXI of 1883" and is furnished with provisions, clothing, fittings, etc., as required thereby.

The cost of return passage from time to time is shown in a statement separately supplied.

The statistics relating to repatriation given as Appendix 12 of the McNeill and Chinnmanlall Report, 1913, have been brought to date and attached as requested.

APPENDIX XX.

The Nuan-Luckhoo Scheme.

A.—Extract from the pamphlet "British Guiana and the Empire, 1919."—

(a) (The scheme) "embraced the undertaking of large schemes of irrigation and drainage:—

- (i) For the peasant farmers and small proprietors now living on imperfectly drained and irrigated lands on the foreshore of the three counties of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice;
- (ii) For any lands to be provided under any scheme of colonisation from outside sources as an inducement to non-residents to come in to settle;
- (iii) For any lands provided for local workers who have complied with similar conditions and who desire to settle.

This problem was one which the leaders of the movement stated at the outset to be necessary to solve. Its solution was one in which everybody was invited to contribute and the entire body of representative opinion answered the invitation." [*Ibid* page 4.]

(b) 1. "No colony funds or Crown lands to be applied to furnish inducements to work, in connection with any industry unless such inducements are open on the same terms to the natives of the colony equally with persons (of whatever race) brought into the colony from other countries."

2. "The undertaking of an organised colonial campaign of sanitation by the united action of all our towns, villages and estates, the recognition of the special engineering difficulties connected with municipal and rural sanitation, and the official invitation of expert assistance (such as that of a sanitary engineer or of the Rockefeller Board in regard to those diseases, like ankylostomiasis and malaria, in which they specialise)."

"The creation by Ordinance of one or more representative Central Committees or Boards (1) to deal with disputes in connection with cane-farming with the assistance of officially appointed test chemists; (2) to advise in each district in any disputes between Capital and Labour when invoked by either party; (3) to advise with authority on wages questions after full investigations of the facts and conditions of employment in each trade or industry; (4) to watch the interests of both locally born and new workers both as regards pay and land benefits."

"The provision of regular and frequent steamer communications with the British West Africa, India, and other countries from which a supply of colonists can be obtained, and with which colonial trade may be opened."

Resolutions.

(c). 2. "That the Government be respectfully requested to place before the Combined Court a proposal to set aside a sum of not less than \$500,000, viz., \$100,000 a year for the five years—commencing 1920—for the purpose of

carrying out under Government supervision accepted or future scheme of irrigation and drainage of lands throughout the colony, independently of any lands irrigated or drained under any colonisation scheme."

3. "That the Government be respectfully requested to take steps to introduce into the colony in each year for the coming three years five thousand adults of races suitable for colonisation under local tropical conditions, such adults to be as far as possible in families, the sexes being approximately equal."

6. "That, in case of any scheme of local colonisation being accepted by the Indian or any Government which involves any form of land settlement by persons from outside the colony, similar inducement of land settlement on similar terms of service be offered to locally resident workers."

9. "That the framers of the final report be requested to provide some suggestions for encouraging settlers of the small capitalist and land-owner type." (Vide page 5.)

B.—Summary of British Guiana Scheme prepared by the British Guiana Deputation and placed before the Committee appointed by the Imperial Legislative Assembly of India in 1920.

The Scheme.

1. British Guiana being a country as large as Great Britain with only three residents per square mile has set aside a sum of approximately £600,000 to offer inducements to tropical settlers of the agricultural class basing all settlements on the family. The recent change in Imperial policy as regards preference and the urgent demands for foodstuffs all over the world enable it to incur expenditure and to see a prosperous future for agriculture and pasturage.

2. The Colony has entered into an agreement which, if necessary, can be carried out as from 15th March 1920 with the Nourse Section of the P. and O. line (Offices Calcutta and London) to establish a regular passenger and cargo line of steamers directly between Indian ports and British Guiana, sailing at the outset once in two months, and later monthly. Accommodation will include first and third class and later second class:

3. Suitable agricultural families (and if necessary to complete my list a limited number of male adults equal in amount) on applying to Official Information Bureau to be maintained by the Guianese Government under responsible salaried officers in populous districts will, after medical examination, be given free passages. Not more than five thousand adults per year for three years are contemplated. No recruiters are employed. No contract will be allowed. Settlers will receive temporary hospitality most probably at the hostel now maintained near Calcutta by the Calcutta Municipality for workers going to Burma, or in similar open hostel at Budge Budge or near Bombay or Madras.

4. On arriving in British Guiana they can, if desirous of working land of their own, forthwith obtain land (either agricultural or pastoral) on easy terms in small or large holdings. These terms are those of the Crown Regulations of the Colony. For ten agricultural acres (with a right to a second ten),

these amount to about one hundred rupees spread over five years on condition of beneficial occupation. Grants, Leases and Licences of larger areas are also to be had (*vide* Compendium of General Information published by the Lands and Mines Department). Assistance in selecting land will be given by Government officers and financial assistance will be rendered through the Agricultural Bank and from the Colonisation Fund for the starting of homes and cultivation.

5. If the settler prefers to accept employment to begin with, whether to gain local experience or because he prefers it, the Guianese Government guarantees him employment at the local rates of pay for piece work (*e.g.*, on sugar estates) on seven hours a day amount to about three rupees for males at the present time and for females at lighter work about half of that. He is also provided with a garden plot and with housing accommodation and grazing privilege. Families receive a separate new and improved design of cottages.

Cost of Living.

6. The Deputation's memorandum on the cost of living shows that it is under 40 per cent. of the ordinary wages for piece work and enables a male wage-earner to save at least a rupee a day. This can be supplemented by independent work, by cattle grazing and by the work of the wife and family. A man can comfortably support a wife and family (non-workers) on his pay.

7. Wages are to be controlled by official Arbitration Boards to prevent variation unfair to the wage-earners. These Boards therefore in practice assure a maximum rate.

Reward Grants.

8. Reward grants of five acres of coast or river land specially protected by embankments from flood prepared for irrigation and drainage and for cultivation will be given to families who have completed three years of residence during which they have been engaged either for themselves or for employers in any form of agricultural work in the Colony. The cost to the colony of this part of the Colonisation scheme is estimated to be about one and a half million dollars or nearly five million rupees. This land will become the freehold property of the owner if beneficially occupied, on the same terms and conditions as the other Crown lands. The cost of preparing the land, not less than fifty pounds per plot, will be a free gift to the claimant by the Colony. Further assistance will be given as regards housing accommodation and farming equipment. The necessary lands have been earmarked by the Government or will be acquired under the Lands Acquisition Ordinance.

Supervision.

10. The Indian has been asked to appoint its own official (at the cost of British Guiana) to watch the interest of the settlers.

The deputation has also welcomed the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi that after a certain period, say six months or a year, an independent report should be made by a nominee of the populace and the deputation offers to pay all his expenses.

The Deputation now suggests that a Committee consisting of three persons, viz., an officer appointed by the Indian Government, a nominee of the official section of the I. C. Council, and Mr. C. F. Andrews should report on the working. Such a Committee could set out in December, viz., about six months from the inauguration of the scheme. Whatever Committee is appointed should not consist of less than three.

Repatriation.

11. Any individual or family will be sent back free of charge at any time if the Indian Government supervising officer so requests. This applies to women or children whose husbands or parents die in the Colony or en route. Should such official's request not be made the individual or the family can claim repatriation at half estimated cost to Guiana (such cost to be estimated at beginning of scheme) after three years' residence, one quarter cost after five years and free of charge after seven years. Repatriation will not affect any land or other rights fully acquired. Cheap return tickets will be provided for individuals or families desirous of visiting India for family reasons, business or pleasure. The object of the scheme is to promote a regular flow and fellow of colonists as well as a regular commercial intercourse between the two countries.

Non-Agricultural Settlers

As first class accommodation is being provided (eventually also second class), assisted passages or passages at very low rates (about one-third of the present cost of the unassisted journey) will be provided. A limited number of professional men (especially medical men and engineers) and a much larger number of clerks and schoolmasters are required. Applications will be considered on their merits and free passages will be given in some cases, assisted passages in others. One priest or minister of religion for each religious group will be taken free on each voyage with right of repatriation free. Traders and capitalists will also be given cheap passages.

Political, Municipal, Landholding, and Trading rights.—Equality of rights of every kind exists in the Colony. There is an elected majority of 14 to 8 in the Legislature. The Franchise is very low. Settlers can obtain the Parliamentary Vote after six months' residence and holding of the qualifications of the Political Constitution Ordinances of 1891 and 1909 which are easily within the reach of any settler whether working for himself or for an employer. Possession of three acres of cultivated land or the income of the average worker secure a vote.

English law has recently been introduced but Indian marriage law and custom are specially protected.

Guarantees.

12. Guarantees of the continuance of existing privileges (apart from the best assurance of all the existence of liberal institutions dating over a century in a British South American Colony) can be furnished by the Colony or the Colonial Office stating that their definite policy is the continuance of the political and commercial equality of all races.

If necessary, a Declaratory Ordinance could be passed in Guiana recording the actual position, but of course one legislature cannot bind another. An official declaration of policy by the Secretary of State is the effective course. The Colonial Office can refuse to approve of legislation attempting to violate the accepted principle even if the Government of the Colony in view of such a policy would allow such a Bill to pass or even to be introduced. The consent of the Governor is necessary for the introduction or passing of legislation. Alteration of our settled working institutions without the consent of the people of the Colony (already nearly half East Indian) and of the Colonial Office is unthinkable to anybody acquainted with the West Indian possessions.

Health Conditions.

The climate is a good one but unsuitable for manual labour on the coast lands by Northern Europeans. This is not the case for Southern Europeans. Health conditions are better in every respect than in India, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Mauritius, and most other tropical colonies. Much improvement, however, can be effected, and this is being done now by means of the united sanitary campaign by towns, villages, and estates which is part of our scheme. Our worst death rate has never come to within $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the Indian rate. Our ordinary rate is about one-half of the Indian rate.

Enclosure No. 2.

1. Guarantees to be given as follows :—

- (a) By a declaration by the Legislative Assembly of British Guiana that the present civic status involves equality of the British subjects in the Colony politically and commercially and an assurance by the Government of the Colony and by the Colonial Office that the maintenance of such status is a settled policy.

2. Guarantees as regards :—

- (i) Wages, (ii) Housing, (iii) Sanitation, (iv) Repatriation, (v) Inspection by the Indian Government officers and the representatives deputed by Indian leaders, (vi) Repatriation in the event of any change in the status, (vii) the number of men not to exceed the number of women.

APPENDIX XXI.

*The Grievances of the Immigrants in British Guiana.**(Briefly summarised and enumerated).*

During the months of February and March 1922, as the members of the Deputation toured, together or individually, the East Indian Immigrants travelled long distances to meet them in order to state their grievances orally and in writing. While public addresses, which were presented to the Deputation in towns, dealt with the general problems, the petitions of the immigrant labourers dwelt at length on the hardships which they had to undergo on the estates and outside. The fact that there were Indian Members on the Deputation, who could converse with them in vernaculars, has naturally encouraged the East Indian labourers to confidently seek interviews and tell them their sorrows and difficulties.

The number of petitions in English was 49, in Telugu 12, in Tamil and Malayalam 27 while many were in Hindi and Urdu. Further about 500 statements were briefly recorded by P. Govindaraj Pillai, the President's son and Private Secretary, in a bound book from day to day in the presence of the President, or Mr Tivary, or of both as stated by individuals or group of labourers. This was besides the evidence given by batches of labourers before the Deputation in their public sittings.

The petitioners state that their sufferings could not be adequately expressed in words. They have to suffer great hardships in earning their livelihood on the sugar estates, and their earnest desire is, therefore, to return to India, which they could not do, on account of the enormous passage money now demanded. They complained that they had been duped by false hopes and promises. Some stated that they had been told in India their work was to be on paddy fields, but on landing in British Guiana they had been allotted work on sugar estates the nature of which work was so cheerless, hard and continuous that "a well-built strong person becomes weak, and falls an easy victim to diseases." They could not escape, and they have keenly felt as if they were caught in a "steel-trap" or confined in "a cage."

Low wages and high prices.—They all complain of high prices of food-stuffs and other necessities such as cloth, the hard task-works and low wages. Their wages, they point out, are barely sufficient to get full meals, let alone decent clothing. It is utterly impossible for them under the circumstances to save enough of money to pay for their passage back to India.

Long hours of work.—Almost all petitions mention about the long hours of work they have to do. In the grinding seasons, they are forced to get up at 3 A.M. so that they might cook their food, walk long distances, to be at 6 A.M. on their work which is often more than four or five miles from their ranges. And at the close of their hard labour, which had to be done despite heavy rain or hot sun, it would generally be 10 P.M. before they returned home walking, tired and exhausted, at times soaked to the skin in the rain. Afterwards, they must prepare their simple meal, eat and go to sleep at a late hour. They cannot get more than 3 or 4 hours of rest and sleep, for they have to get up again at 3 A.M. During the midday they have to take food which has become cold,

very often, with ill-effects. It is no wonder, they allege, that many fall sick, and for want of proper medical aid and nourishment, they become unfit for hard work, with the result they become prematurely decrepit to be turned out to drag on in a destitute or disabled condition.

Harsh and Brutal treatment.—Almost all petitions make mention of harsh and inconsiderate treatment of the labourers by men, who are directly in charge of them. Many complained, they say, to the Immigration Officers, who are but “silent listeners” of their grievances, without the power to obtain redress. The Immigration Officer is referred to as “Crosby”, because in the early days, Mr. Crosby, a well-known Immigration Officer, was very sympathetic towards the Indian labourers and did much to mitigate their hard-lot.

The Mistries of the Estate are referred to in a Telugu petition as the servants of the ‘God of Death’ (Yama). If complaints are made to the superior officers, they are asked to ‘pack off’ from the Estates. And if they go away, they cannot get work elsewhere, nor can they find a place for even a temporary shelter.

Fines are constantly imposed for trivial faults. And protests aggravate the situation. *Sick-leave* is more often refused than granted. And when a person stays at home on account of illness, a rent is demanded for living in the range in day-time, stating that the ranges are free only for nights. More often their vessels are thrown out of their dwellings, and they are asked to clear out of the estates for protesting and reporting, and for not attending to work for any length of time, during sickness. If they attempt to get on elsewhere, summons is taken out against them and they are imprisoned for non-payment of some alleged dues, or on some other charge. While under work, they get at times “violent beating, kicking and licking.” The management, they allege, are quite deaf to their complaints and do not make any enquiries. Several petitions allege that some have committed suicide on account of the inhuman treatment and relentless exaction of work for wages arbitrarily fixed.

Bad Housing Accommodation.—Almost all labourers are insistent on returning to India summing up their hardships in one epithet ‘unbearable’; several do not therefore enter into a detailed narrative of their hardships. They complain, however, of bad housing, insufficiency of accommodation and damp and insanitary surroundings. The ground is moist and they have to sleep on planks. They mention that a kind of worm attacks legs even when alive, and the mosquito pests are rampant. Some describe the rooms in the ranges as no better than “pig styes”, “cattle sheds,” or “stables.”

Bad drinking water.—The water provided for drink is neither clean nor good. The water is brought in open canals from the interior of the forests, and these are the waterways for bringing sugar-canes in punts or boats. Mules are driven on the banks to drag the punts. Rotten vegetation float in the water. There is sulphur smell. As a result, a labourer is liable to be in sick-bed for at least a month in every year.

Hospital Treatment.—While the sick-leave arrangements are harsh, the treatment meted out to the Indian labourers in hospitals is bad. Ordinarily

old shawls are given for covering, and at the time of the visitor's coming, new shawls are given. The dieting is not satisfactory. Immediately after their discharge from hospitals, they are sent to hard work, without any respite what soever. This, it is alleged, would make them ill again, and a person, who could live for a year, would die in three months. A person, suffering from fever, is given a dose of quinine, and he is asked to proceed to work forthwith. Refusal to obey means ejection from the ranges, and starvation.

Difficulties of women—Grievances of women are narrated in some petitions. Women have to wade through canals, to pick up sugar cane fallen from the punts. In the canals crocodiles abound, and several were bitten. Even in an advanced stage of pregnancy, they are made to work contrary to the rules. And the Government do not see their way to enforce the rules or punish anybody for the breach of them. One Tamil petition makes mention of the fact that the mistries molest their women when they have gone away to the fields in the early morning, and they despair of getting redress. If women do not work from some inconvenience or weakness, husband's wages are cut down to much per week as house rent.

Differential treatment—A Telugu petition complains bitterly of the differential treatment meted out to the Indians and the Whites.

In the matter of compensation for injuries received during the course of business, the Whites are paid liberally, while the Indians are not paid single pie and are driven out to lead a 'dog's life.'

Marriage and inheritance.—In the matter of marriage, the Indian form is not recognized. If an Indian dies leaving some property, though there are his wife and children, the property is taken by the Government saying that it would be paid to the relatives in India, while his dearest and nearest in the place are left quite destitute.

Again the Hindus are not allowed to cremate their dead according to their custom.

Midwives.—Indian midwives are not allowed to help at child-birth under penalty of law. Two of them, women that had come from India who had attended at deliveries and helped to see mothers and babies quite safe, through the early stage for moderate remuneration, were sentenced to a month's imprisonment each, because they had not obtained certificates as duly qualified midwives.

Negro women, who had obtained certificates had to be called in. Their charges are exorbitant, and they are lacking in sympathy, in consequence of their ignorance of the habits and the sentiments of the East Indians. The petitioners want that experienced East Indian women should be allowed to help, as in India, at deliveries as midwives.

For want of Dharamsalas the labourers who are turned out of the estates, the broken and the indigent, have no place to rest in. If the poor helpless East Indians are not to be despised by the blacks and spurned and kicked at by the black constables, when they are forced by dire necessity to rest and sleep by the road sides, Dharamsalas should be built.

PART II

REPORT

BY

G. F. Keatinge, C.I.E., I.C.S., (retired).

Introduction.

The terms of our reference as stated in the telegram from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India, dated October 23rd, 1921, are as follows :—

- (1) To investigate local conditions in British Guiana.
- (2) To examine on the spot the suitability of the Colonization scheme prepared by the representatives of British Guiana.
- (3) To report whether any further guarantees in respect of status of Indian immigrants are necessary before emigration is re-opened.

The enquiry was made in British Guiana from February 12th to April 7th, 1922, during which time we were able to visit the greater part of the coastal tract and to make several trips to localities at some distance from the coast. We visited many sugar estates, villages and settlements, attended many public meetings, received a number of addresses and written communications on the subject of our delegation, and had ample opportunity to discuss the matter with all classes of the Indian and other communities.

We received every assistance and consideration at the hands of His Excellency the Governor of British Guiana and the officials of the Colony, and in particular from the staff of the Immigration Department and the Agricultural Department. Mr. Stewart, the Agent General from Immigration, made excellent arrangements for us everywhere, and Mr. R. Ward, the Government Botanist, accompanied me on several trips and was most kind in putting his knowledge and experience of the Colony at my disposal. The authorities of the sugar estates gave us every facility to conduct our enquiries, and we were received with kindness and hospitality everywhere.

As regards nomenclature there is a liability to some confusion. In British Guiana and the West Indies everyone is at times called an "Indian," a West Indian, an East Indian, or an aboriginal Indian. In this report the term "Indian" denotes a person whose origin is India, and who would be designated as an East Indian in British Guiana. The term "aboriginal" denotes an aboriginal Indian; negroes are called Africans or blacks, and people of mixed race "coloured" in accordance with the practice of the Colony. The term "creole" is applied to persons of any race who are born in the Colony; so that an Indian born in British Guiana is known as a Creole Indian.

The dollar in British Guiana bears a fixed rate of exchange of 4s. 2d. Money in larger denominations is expressed in dollars, and in smaller denominations in shillings and pence. I have assumed the Rupee to be worth 1s. 4d., and that for rough calculations \$1 = Rs. 3.

The statistical figures quoted are the latest available. At the time of our deputation the figures for 1921 were available in very few cases. Those for 1920 were available in most cases; but in some cases the figures for 1919 were the last ones procurable. The fact that the figures for three separate years are used in different connections may cause apparent discrepancies but such discrepancies do not affect the general argument.

PART I.

TO INVESTIGATE LOCAL CONDITIONS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL CONDITIONS.

1. Some idea of the physical conditions of the colony may be gathered from the map (Appendix I) which shows only the coastal tract, and from Appendices II and III. The map shows the whole of the area which for present purposes need be considered. Indeed it is only a very small fraction of the area shown in the map which is now occupied or likely to be occupied in the near future. The map is not quite up-to-date, but the occupied areas are shown in the rectangular blocks in the alluvial area marked blue, immediately along the sea coast and up the creeks. It will be seen that even of the narrow alluvial strip only a small part is occupied. The main Government road can be traced by the dotted line running within a mile or two of the coast line from the Courantyne river on the Eastern extremity as far as the Pomeroon river towards the west. This is a good main road connected up with ferries over the Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo rivers. Side roads run for some distance up the main creeks, and there are short lengths of branch roads connecting up villages with the main road. There is also a length of railway between the Berbice and Essequibo rivers. These are the only communications, excepting the facilities for transport offered by the rivers and creeks, which are everywhere good, within their own sphere of influence, and in some localities remarkably good. It must be recognised, however, that in tracts which, in a natural state, are a combination of swamp and very thick forest, all land remote from communications is out of the picture, so far as small settlers are concerned. It is only along the existing roads, the creeks and the rivers that population is to be found.

2. For the purpose in hand British Guiana may be divided up into three parts, viz. :—

(a) The belt of alluvial clay and detrital matter, marked blue in the map, lying along the coast, has a breadth of from 10 to 40 miles. The alluvial clay consists of a rich and fertile bed of deep mud brought down by the Orinoco river, and upon this there has been superimposed in places detrital matter of vegetable origin, brought down by the local rivers, giving a soil of great natural fertility. The whole of this belt is below the level of the sea at high tide. It is protected from the sea by elaborate sea defences constructed and maintained by the colonial government; and to make it fit for cultivation it needs to be effectively drained. In such a situation drainage is naturally a matter of some difficulty; but large blocks have been laid off for cultivation by throwing up earthen dams and introducing a system of drains and sluice gates, so that the surplus water can drain away into the sea or the creeks at low tide. This method of laying off the land is known as empoldering. In some cases drainage can be provided by gravity flow, but in other cases an elaborate pumping system is necessary.

3. (b) Behind this belt of alluvial clay is a belt of sandy and clayey ^{pr.} elementary soils, derived from the disintegration of the various country rocks *in situ*, traversed by sand dunes which rise from 50 to 180 feet above sea level. This belt contains naturally drained land and offers a good living place for man and beast. The sandy soils often do well under temporary cultivation, and some of the soils in this belt may offer fair prospects for the growing of particular crops under careful treatment; but consisting, as they do, of sand reefs, poor laterite soils and intractable laterite clays, they offer little encouragement for the growing of ordinary fields crops, and for crop production compare very unfavourably with the rich alluvial soils. When the sand reefs adjoin the alluvium, the proximity of these two classes of land offers good facilities for settlement, since the sandy ground is healthy and attractive as a dwelling place for man and beast, while the soil suitable for cultivation is close at hand. To some extent advantage has been taken of this combination of circumstances in Essequibo County, near Suddie, where the sand reefs run down to the main road along the sea shore, but over most of the coastal tract the alluvial belt is much deeper, and the population is of necessity concentrated along the main road, running through the wet alluvial soil near the sea, while the line at which the sand reefs adjoin the alluvium is much further back, with no available communications, the rich soil a swamp and the sand reefs a dense forest.

4. (c) The hinterland behind the sand and clay belt, and beyond the distance for which the rivers are navigable, is a vast uninhabited expanse of country which has never been systematically explored from the point of view of agricultural development. In the interests of future development it is much to be desired that a soil survey of this area should be carried out by an agricultural expert. People who have been in the interior are unanimous in declaring that this vast tract includes many stretches of varied and excellent soil. It is mostly under primary forest, but there are large stretches of undulating savannahs (grass lands) suitable for ranching. I have been informed, in particular, that there are excellent stretches of soil on the upper waters of the Berbice and Pomeroon rivers. In the interior there are high mountains, elevated *plateaux* with a healthy and temperate climate, an abundance of good water, and facilities for water power. It would therefore seem to offer good prospects for future development. So far as the present is concerned, however, the point is that the interior is very inaccessible, and in the absence of communications it is not a practicable proposition for small holders without capital to settle there, unless they are prepared to lead a self-contained and savage life. The difficulty could be overcome by opening up the interior with roads and railways, but this would involve a heavy expenditure for which funds are not at present available, and from which any adequate return would be problematical.

5. It is mainly for the reasons indicated above, the swampy nature of the alluvial belt on the coast, the infertility of the sand and clay belt behind the alluvium, and the inaccessibility of the interior, that the efforts to populate the colony have never been successful, and that 99 per cent. of the Colony remains to this day unoccupied. In view of the proposal to colonize British Guiana with Indians, the solution of the problem is of interest, not only to the

Colony, but also to India. I shall therefore suggest in Chapter X the method by which the difficulty can, in my opinion, be most satisfactorily overcome.

6. *Rainfall and Temperature.*—The rainfall is recorded for a number of stations near the coast in the counties of Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo, respectively. The rainfall is lowest in Berbice, on the eastern side of the Colony, and steadily increases as you go west. With a view to giving a general idea of the situation the following figures for Demerara County, the central tract, are shown.

	Inches.
Mean annual rainfall for Demerara County for 75 years, from 1846 to 1921	87·52
Maximum rainfall recorded—year 1892	132·21
Minimum rainfall recorded—year 1868	44·93

To show the variation in the rainfall as between the different parts of the coastal tracts the following figures for the year 1919 are given, viz. :—

	Inches.
Berbice County (East)	73·52
Demerara County (Central)	85·07
Essequibo County (West)	103·30
Morawhiana (N. W. District, extremo West)	157·16

To show the seasonal distribution of the rainfall, the monthly rainfalls at Georgetown (Demerara) are given for the two years 1920 and 1921, of which 1920 was considered a dry year and 1921 a wet year.

Mean rainfall recorded at the various stations in Georgetown (Demerara).

		IN INCHES.											
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1920	..	15·74	8·57	1·87	·06	4·65	11·00	7·25	5·12	2·51	1·23	3·06	11·11
1921	..	4·84	·85	3·62	9·07	1·19	21·55	13·50	3·50	3·61	8·02	20·69	15·80

The total for 1920 is 73·97 and for 1921 106·73, giving a difference of only about 30 per cent. as between a wet and a dry year. It will be seen, however, that as between the same months in the different years, the variation of rainfall is much greater. There is, however, this general uniformity, from year

to year, that the periods February to April and August to October tend to be dry months, and the alternating quarters wet months.

7. *Temperature*.—Considering the latitude of British Guiana, which is 7° and comparable with that of Ceylon, the temperature is extremely mild. For practical purposes the range appears to be from 70° to 90° Fahr., and during the month of April I noticed that the extremes were 72° and 82°. The climate of the coast is not unlike that of the Bombay Konkan, but distinctly cooler and pleasanter by day. At night there is never any sting in the air. Few Europeans find it necessary to wear sun helmets, and most of them wear an ordinary felt hat. On the hills, even at slight elevations of 200 or 300 feet the climate is markedly pleasanter, indeed the climate on the hills in the N. W. district (about 300 feet high) reminded me strongly of that of Mahableshwar in May. The N. E. trade-wind that blows almost throughout the year keeps the climate pleasant, though I understand that there are periods in August when these winds fail and the climate is unpleasantly humid and stuffy. In the far interior I understand that the range of temperature is much greater; but, speaking generally, the climate of British Guiana presents none of the features of extreme heat and a considerable degree of cold which one associates with the plain country of northern and central India.

CHAPTER II.—ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.—GENERAL REMARKS.

8. The economic investigation naturally falls under two heads—

- (a) Agricultural.
- (b) Non-agricultural.

Of which the former is by far the most important, not only from the point of view of the Indian immigrants, but also with reference to the existing circumstances of the Colony. In Appendix IV are given some figures regarding the numbers and occupations of the population, and it is only necessary to state here that out of a total population of the Colony returned as "occupied," 47 per cent. are shown as agriculturists, while as regards the Indian population returned as "occupied," no less than 92 per cent. are shown as agriculturists. From this it will be realised that for the Colony in general and for the Indian population in particular agriculture is by far the most important industry; indeed it is hardly too much to say that it is the only industry with the exception of the collection and marketing of forest products. The non-agricultural part of the population derive their living mainly from handling and dealing in agricultural produce or from trade with the agriculturists in imported goods. Manufactures and handicrafts are conspicuously absent.

9. It is proposed to consider the position of Indian colonists and the prospects for future Indian immigrants both as settlers on their own lands and as agricultural labourers working for hire. In Appendices II and III are shown some details regarding the land, land tenure and agriculture of British Guiana. From this and from Chapter I, which deals with the physical conditions, some idea of the situation can be gathered. It will be realised that under existing circumstances the only land that can be con-

sidered is the alluvial land on the coast, and that this land presents considerable difficulties to the would-be settler. The low-lying situation of the land and the necessity for extensive drainage operations and embankments against flood water mean that considerable capital is necessary. It is for this reason that the tendency has always been for agricultural development to take place in the direction of large estates worked on a plantation basis, rather than in the direction of small peasant holdings. An account of these estates will be given in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III.—INDIANS AS LANDED PROPRIETORS, LARGE AND SMALL.

10. If a man wishes to settle in British Guiana as an independent cultivator, there is abundance of waste land to be obtained on easy terms (as explained in Appendix II), on freehold tenure up to 10 acres, or in large blocks on a lease from Government which extends to 198 years. So far there is no difficulty. The physical conditions of the country, however, will confine the area for the selection of his land to the alluvial strip on the coast. It is on this strip that Indian colonists have settled freely in the past and have obtained freehold and leasehold land in holdings both large and small. The physical conditions of this tract demand a considerable outlay of capital to make the land fit for habitation and for successful cultivation; and the objects for which this outlay is needed are—

- (1) Empoldering the land by means of embankments and drainage.
- (2) Communications.
- (3) Drinking water supply.
- (4) For successful rice cultivation it is very desirable, if not essential, that some irrigation facilities should exist to provide security against dry seasons. This is a matter which usually involves no great engineering difficulty.
- (5) As population extends a demand soon arises for education, sanitation and medical facilities. It is the function of the Government to provide these, but it is obvious that, unless the population extends in an orderly fashion with some degree of concentration, the supply of these facilities is likely to lag behind the demand.

11. To provide for these purposes it is necessary either that the individual Indian settlers shall have a good deal of capital or that some organisation or co-operative system shall be devised to meet the case. Indian colonists have settled all along the coast from the Courantyne to the Pomeroon rivers. It is proposed to give some account of such settlements.

12. *The Mahaicony Creek Settlement.*—This is a substantial settlement of Indians on the Mahaicony river which runs into the sea about 30 miles east of Georgetown. It is only 20 years since Indians began to settle on this area, and during that period they have converted a strip of land for some 25 miles up the creek from forest and swamp savannah to cultivated land; and their houses are planted along the bank of the river which forms an excellent water-

way. The Indian population in this settlement now amounts to 2,000 and the land held by them to 20,000 acres. This is mainly rice land, but includes 2,000 acres of grazing land and plots of cocoanuts and ground provisions cultivated for domestic use. The largest holding is that of Mr Jagdeo who owns 3,000 acres of rice land which he tills with motor ploughs. He also owns a rice mill, a steam thresher and a motor launch. Another Indian holds 1,500 acres, 10 Indians hold 500 acres apiece, and there are holdings of all sizes between 500 and 25 acres, farms of 50 to 100 acres, being a common size. The soil is a rich alluvial clay, mixed in places with pegass (vegetable matter).

13. Now it is clear that, with farms of the size mentioned above, rice cultivation cannot be carried on by the intensive and labourious methods employed in India. The population does not suffice for this. Transplantation, of necessity, gives way to broadcasting, and the reaping of the crop is often unduly delayed for want of hands to gather it. Mechanical reapers are badly required, and if these are to be used, rice with a stronger straw will probably have to be introduced. These are matters in which the settlers need assistance. The insistent demand, however, put forward by the people in this tract is for some arterial system of drainage and irrigation. The settlers have thrown up embankments and opened up drains on their own account. Indeed without some such operations the tract would not be habitable or cultivable. These works vary in efficiency according to the means and industry of the individual settler; but speaking generally they leave much to be desired. The drains deliver into the creek, and owing to the relative levels of land and water, it is only at low tide that the drains will work. This is the ordinary experience throughout the alluvial area. The peculiar difficulty of this case is that in times of heavy rain the level of the creek rises so greatly that drainage may become impossible, even at low tide, for a week or more on end; so that the possibility of drainage is liable to be cut off when the need is the greatest. To meet an occasional drought also it would be very advantageous to have an intake for irrigation water higher up the creek, an arrangement which would present no great difficulty. The people suggest that a through drain running parallel to the creek and delivering into the sea, with a road on the bank of the drain, would meet the drainage difficulty; and to provide for this and for the amount of irrigation which is necessary they want Government to advance \$400,000, appoint a Board to carry out the scheme, and assess the landholders in such a way as to meet the cost. They claim that 40,000 acres could be drained and irrigated at a cost of \$400,000, and that by this means they could double the average yield of rice per acre. With irrigation and drainage they say that they could get 25 to 30 bags of paddy to the acre (=4,000 lbs. of paddy=2,400 lbs. of clean rice), while now they get only half this amount.

14. Another demand was for medical and educational facilities for which they are now in the main dependent on the township of Mahaicony at the mouth of the creek. Now I can offer no opinion as to the solution of the particular engineering and other problems involved, and only state the position of the Mahaicony settlement as typical of many others. The point, however, which I want to make clear is this. Here is a settlement of 2,000 Indians, say 500 families, owning 20,000 acres of good rice land. A fair number of

sidered is the alluvial land on the coast, and that this land presents considerable difficulties to the would-be settler. The low-lying situation of the land and the necessity for extensive drainage operations and embankments against flood water mean that considerable capital is necessary. It is for this reason that the tendency has always been for agricultural development to take place in the direction of large estates worked on a plantation basis, rather than in the direction of small peasant holdings. An account of these estates will be given in Chapter IV.

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11. To provide for these purposes it is necessary either that the individual Indian settlers shall have a good deal of capital or that some organisation or co-operative system shall be devised to meet the case. Indian colonists have settled all along the coast from the Courantyne to the Pomeroon rivers. It is proposed to give some account of such settlements.

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complaints that Government had not introduced some system of drainage for their benefit; and it was difficult to see how they could make a living by cultivation unless effective drainage was undertaken. The attraction of this land was that it abutted on the main road, and was in close proximity to the Pomeroon river, a good waterway. This land had a high potential value on account of its situation, and in some cases, at any rate, it appeared to have been bought as a speculation. The purchaser had done just sufficient cultivation to satisfy the condition of "effective occupation," and was waiting for a rise in land values. In some cases as much as \$50, an acre, had been paid for such land. Apparently several schemes for the drainage of this land had been drawn up by the Department of Lands and Mines, but the cost of the drainage was large and the number of the settlers was few, so that the schemes presented a difficult business proposition.

19. The cases mentioned so far are those of Indians who have acquired either from Government or otherwise holdings, large and small, and have brought their lands under cultivation. Where the settlers were in possession of a considerable amount of capital and the physical difficulties were not too great, a large measure of success has been achieved without the intervention of Government. For the smaller men, however, a comprehensive scheme of drainage has usually been found necessary, and in some cases has been carried out with the help of Government. Another system by which land has been taken up by small holders is exemplified by the following cases:—

20. (a) *Windsor Forest and Jalousie*, Demerara Country, 5 miles from Georgetown. On these two settlements, containing about 3,000 acres of cultivated land, an Indian population of about 1,000 has been settled on holdings of from 1 to 10 acres of land, on which they grow rice and ground provisions. These lands were originally sugar estates taken over by Government to defray arrears of sea-defence dues which were outstanding from the sugar estates. The lands are well empoldered and laid off, and the sea defences, backdam, side channels, drains and roads are kept up by Government agency. A drinking water canal and schools have been provided, and a resident manager looks after the estates. The land is rented out to settlers at \$6 an acre including all maintenance charges, and the tenants have the option of buying the freehold of their land by paying \$850, per acre, for 25 years instead of the rent of \$6. By doing this they would acquire the freehold of their land in 25 years, and would then have to pay no further charges for the land except about \$2 an acre, as maintenance charges. House plots are given out in the village site at a rate of 70 cents a plot, and the houses erected by the Indian settlers vary from wattle and mud huts, costing nothing except the labour of putting them up, to substantial raised wooden houses costing as much as \$500 or \$1,000, apiece. Communications are good, as the high road runs in front of the village and the railway line behind, and there is a railway station just behind the village. Georgetown, which is only 5 miles distant, offers a good market for produce of all kinds, and the people seemed to be distinctly prosperous.

21. (b) *Hague* is another Indian settlement near the settlements last mentioned. The conditions and control are similar; but the people live, not in a village site, but on the bank of the canal close to their holdings. The

holdings are smaller, being only 1 or 2 acres, apiece, and most of the people here spent part of their time working on neighbouring sugar estates. They appeared to be comfortably settled.

22. So much for the condition of Indians who have settled as landholders. The question now arises as to what are the immediate prospects for Indians who wish to acquire land in British Guiana. It is regrettable to have to state that as things are at present the prospects are not at all good. A man who has ready money to put down can buy occupied land at the current market rate of about \$50 an acre, though small holdings are not often on the market. It is open to any one to take up waste land on the rich alluvium, on easy terms, and to engage single-handed in a struggle with the undrained swamp and jungle, without communications or the elementary conveniences of civilization; but the struggle is too severe for the small man. Communities of Indians, equipped with a fair amount of capital, have done this in the past with considerable success; but the best spots have already been picked out and occupied, and the back lands present greater difficulties. In many places Indians represented that they wanted to take up more land, and that it was not available. The Agent General for Immigration also informed me that formerly he had opened a register for Indian Immigrants who wanted to take up land suitable for immediate cultivation, and that no less than 5,000 men registered their names for this purpose; but so little suitable land was available that he gave up registering further names. Government might, of course, open up suitable tracts of land in the alluvial area by means of comprehensive drainage and the construction of communications. Many surveys for such a purpose have been made; but the Colonial Government has neither the funds nor the organisation to this on a large scale, and it is objected that it is not business to spend (say) \$80 an acre, on reclaiming land which may be worth \$50 an acre when the operations are completed. It would also be open to Government to purchase sugar estates which come on the market from time to time, and break them up into small holdings, as has been done in the cases of Windsor Forest, Jalousie and Hague, already mentioned. This certainly offers an obvious means for the Colony to retain as permanent settlers many of the Indians who now return to India every year because they cannot get suitable land of their own in British Guiana. I understand that the chief thing which prevents the Government from doing so is the difficulty of finding the funds for the purpose. Thus with millions of acres lying waste there is a large and unsatisfied demand for land. The land is there—land of excellent fertility—the men are there, but the requisite capital is absent.

CHAPTER IV.—INDIANS AS AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

23. It was stated in the last Chapter that agricultural development in British Guiana has always tended to take place in the direction of large plantations. Cocoanuts have been tried on a fairly large scale, rubber, cocoa, limes and coffee on a small scale; but the plantation industry which stands out pre-eminent is sugar. There are 57 sugar estates in the Colony, though some of them are now out of action owing to the severe depression in the

sugar market; and the tendency now-a-days is towards the amalgamation of estates. The sugar estates hold 156,000 acres of empoldered land, of which 70,000 acres are cultivated to sugar cane and 18,000 to other crops. This represents nearly half the area cultivated in the colony, and, if the intensity of the cultivation be considered, far more than half of the agricultural activities. The dependence of the Indian population on the sugar estates can be gathered from the fact that in 1920 out of an Indian population of 124,000 no less than 60,000 were actually living on the sugar estates, and of the remaining 64,000 living off the estates, a fair proportion undertake intermittent work on the estates. It is not possible to state what is the total investment of capital in the sugar estates throughout the Colony, and in cases where figures for the capital employed are available it is not clear exactly how they are calculated in each case; but I have obtained figures for 23 estates showing that the capital employed on them amounts to an aggregate of over \$16 million (say Rs. 5 crores), and the wages paid in 1920 on the same 23 estates amounted to \$3 millions (say Rs. 2½ crores). These incomplete figures indicate the large investment of capital made by the sugar estates and the important part which the wages paid by them play in the economic life of the Colony. No one who visits the estates can fail to be struck by the elaborate work that has been done in empoldering and laying off the land, constructing irrigation and navigation canals, drains and dams, erecting residential and factory buildings, pumping plants, sugar machinery, etc., (*vide* Appendix III).

21. It is now proposed to deal with the position of the agricultural labourer in British Guiana and the wages earned by him. It will be realised that, so far as Indians are concerned, this matter is important chiefly with reference to the sugar estates. To begin with it may be mentioned that it is difficult to give a clearly defined statement of the wages earned on sugar estates because almost the whole of the wages paid are on the *foim*, not of time wages, but of task wages, and it is only by converting the task wages into their equivalent of time wages that the matter can be made intelligible. The extraordinary vicissitudes in the purchasing value of money and in the state of the sugar market during the last few years complicate the matter still further.

25. Messrs. McNeill and Chimanlal, who were deputed by the Government of India in 1913 to report on conditions of labour in British Guiana, gave in their report published in 1915 a detailed account of the system and remuneration of labour on the sugar estates. Much of what they state is applicable to the present time, though the fact that all indentures were abolished in 1920 makes a 'considerable' difference and renders part of their remarks obsolete. It will be sufficient here to quote their conclusions regarding the amount of savings that the wages paid to Indians at that time permitted. At the end of paragraph 17 of their report they state—"If a man does not save upwards of 2 shillings a week, it is because he is below the average standard of industry and physique. Good workers can save from twice to three times that amount". Since then the war has had a very disturbing effect on money values. By 1915 some of the imported articles, such as dhal and wheat flour had risen considerably in price, but until 1917 there was no marked change in the price of the rice and vegetables which form a large part of the Indian dietary, and it was not until towards the end of 1919 that the cost of living rose with a bound. The actual prices of foodstuffs varied from year to year as shown in the subjoined table—

Retail Prices in Georgetown of Foodstuffs, etc., used by East Indians.

	1872.	1892.	1902.	1913.	31-3-14	31-12-15	31-12-16	31-12-17	31-12-18	31-3-19.	31-12-19	31-12-20
	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.
Rice ..	24-28	20-22	25-27	23-24	29-30	23	28-30	36-38	40-44	48	56-60	44-48
Dhal or Peas ..	5-6	5-3½	3-3½	3	3½-4	6	6	12	10	9	16	16
Flour ..	6	3-4	3-4	3½	3	4½	5	9	8	9	11	12
English Potatoes ..	6	3-4	3-4	2	2	4	4	6	5	7	7	8
Onions ..	4-10	4-6	4-6	12	4½-6	12	8	18	20	20	24	20
Garlic ..	1	..	..	½-1	½-1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sugar ..	8	4-5	4-5	3	2-3	3	5	5	6	8	8	8
Biscuits (Crackers) ..	8-10	6-8	6-8	8	6 for lb.	9	8	8	3 for lb.	18	20	3 for lb.
Ghee ..	32-40	24-26	25-30	28	28½-30	32	32	56	60	64	1-20	72
Dried Fish ..	6-8	5-6	5-6	8	about 6	9	10	14	20	20	24	15
Curry Ingredients† ..	24	..	..	12	12	16	16	32	32	28	28-32	32
Mustard Oil ..	20-32	16	16	12	17	14	14	24	32	32	30	48
Coconut Oil ..	24-32	..	..	12	14	9	9	12	20	24	24	16
Kerosine Oil ..	16	9-10	12	8	8	9	8	12	12	14	16	8
Tobacco ..	48	40-45	63-65	96	70	92	96	96	96	1-12	1-20	26

* One gallon = 8 lbs. 4 ozs.

† Black pepper, Mustard seed, Coriander seed, Cummin seed and Turmeric, etc.

26. During the same period the fluctuations in wages, per day actually worked, taking the yearly average of each estate separately, were as follows:—

Year			Men.			Women.
1914-15	..	..	21 to 31 cents	..	..	16 to 20 cents.
1919	..	..	38 to 61 cents	..	..	23 to 40 cents.
1920	..	..	71 to 81 cents	..	..	56 cents

Thus while rice rose between 1914 and 1920 by 50 to 100 per cent., dhak and wheat flour by nearly 400 per cent., and other articles as shown in the list above, wages rose by about 300 per cent.; and the 23 estates for which figures are available paid \$5,891,000 as wages in 1920 as against \$1,982,000 paid in 1913, almost exactly three times as much. No doubt these fluctuations affected different people in different ways, and those, who for any reason were unable to do much work, were hard hit by the high prices; still the years 1919 and 1920 were, speaking generally, a time of great prosperity for the working classes in British Guiana. In 1920 the daily average wage, per day actually worked, for shovelmén on some estates was as high as \$1½, and over, and even women could earn \$1 a day. Speaking of that period, and contrasting it with the period of depression in the early part of 1922, a very intelligent Indian in *Essequibo County* assured me that during the sugar-boom a shovelman could make anything up to \$10 a week and could easily save \$1 out of this. It was the very high prices realised for sugar which enabled the sugar estates to pay such high wages; and the reason why wages ruled so high was that the labour supply was strictly limited, and the sugar estates were competing with one another for the existing labour, with a view to extend their operations to the utmost and to take advantage of the boom.

27. The year 1921 was a period of transition. During the first half of the year prices and wages ruled high, and during the second half of the year there was a great fall in both. Taking the year as a whole the general average of wages earned per day worked was as follows:—

Shovelmén	..	..	..	..	..	52 to 57 cents.
Male weeders	..	..	..	..	..	43 to 54 cents.
Female weeders	..	..	..	..	..	32 to 43 cents.

showing a considerable fall on the figures of 1920, but a rise of about 100 per cent on the pre-war figures.

28. To turn now to the conditions of labour and wages which we found to exist in British Guiana in the early part of 1922 when the Colony was suffering from the general trade depression from which all countries were then suffering, and in particular from the fact that sugar prices had suddenly fallen from the very high level of 1919-20 to the pre-war level. As a result of the slump in sugar and the general financial depression, some sugar estates had gone into liquidation and others were on the brink of collapse. Sugar was admittedly selling at less than the cost of production, and the Colonial government had found it necessary to grant the Sugar Companies a subsidy in the form of a loan proportionate to the number of tons of sugar that each Company manufactured, in order to avert the collapse of the industry upon which the economic

life of the Colony depended. It was inevitable that such conditions should be reflected in the state of the labour market and the level of wages; and this was found to be the case.

29. To bring the table of retail prices of food, etc., used by Indians (as shown in paragraph 25) up-to-date, I subjoin the following table.

Retail prices of Foodstuffs, etc., used by Indians.

Article.	March 15th, 1921.	March 15th, 1922.
Rice per gallon*	48 cents.	24 to 32 cents.
Dhal lb.	16 "	10 "
Flour "	12 "	6 "
English Potatoes "	8 "	5 "
Onions "	24 "	20 "
Green vegetables "	4 "	4 "
Bread "	8 "	8 "
Biscuits 3 = 1 oz. "	1 "	1 "
Sugar (D. C.) per lb.	8 "	4 "
Coffee "	12 "	8 "
Tea "	96 "	72 "
Ghee "	96 "	80 "
Dried Fish "	16 "	10 "
Curry Ingredients "	24 "	16 "
Garlic Bulb	1 "	1 "
Mustard Oil per pint	32 "	28 "
Cocoanut Oil "	24 "	12 "
Kerosine Oil quart	14 "	12 "
Tamarind lb.	24 "	20 "
Salt "	5 "	3 "
Wood 1 piece = 2 lbs.	4 "	4 "
Soap Per cake	4 "	3 "
Matches box	2 "	2 "
Tobacco (Black fat)	96 "	1.44 "
Milk Per pint	10 "	8 "

* 1 gallon = 8 lbs. 4 ozs.

Comparing the above Georgetown prices with those of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras it may be of interest to note that in March 1922 the price of rice in British Guiana was almost identical with that in India, the price of wheat flour in British Guiana (imported from Canada) about 30 per cent. higher than in India; and the price of dhal (imported from India) about three times the price in India.

30. To make the variations in the cost of living clear it would be desirable to show an index figure for the various years. Such an index figure has not been worked out in the Colony, and it would require a more intimate knowledge of the domestic life of Indians in British Guiana than I have, to work out a complete index figure; but taking the three main articles

of food used by Indians in British Guiana, viz. —rice, wheat flour and dal, in the proportion in which they are used, the index figure would work out as follows :—

1913.	31-12-19.	1920.	15-3-21.	15-3-22.
103	307	283	29	157

31. As regards the wages that were actually being paid in the early months of 1922, no annual averages covering this period can be quoted, as has been done for previous years, since the average for 1922 cannot be worked out until the end of the year. This, however, is not a matter of much consequence, since a close inspection of the pay sheets on sugar estates showed that these average figures give no more than a general indication of the facts for the year, though useful for comparison of the standard of one year with that of another. Indeed a study of the pay-sheets revealed the most bewildering differences between the wages earned by various labourers, per day actually worked, differences the meaning of which could be made clear only by inspection of the labourers at work in the fields. In connection with the figures for wages which will now be given two points must be borne in mind,

(a) that the wages are task wages,

(b) that if a man happens to be at work on any day at the time when the roll call of his gang is taken, he is marked as present that day, though he may actually work for only a short part of that day.

Per contra if a man is absent when roll call is taken, he is marked as absent for the day, though actually he may work for part of the day. It makes no practical difference to the labourer whether he is marked present or absent on any day, since he is paid strictly in accordance with the work which he is found to have done by the end of the week.

32. The details of wages which I found to be actually earned on sugar estates in the early months of 1922 are given in Appendix VI. From these figures it will be appreciated that there is a marked difference between the level of wages during the grinding season and during the slack periods. During the grinding season a punt loader or a hardworking shovelman can earn about 3/- a day, while in the slacker seasons he can earn only about 1/8 a day. A bad workman can earn from 1/8 to 2/- during the grinding season and in the slack season only about 1/- a day. Most estates grind for about five months in the year, and taking the wages which were current in January-February 1922 it would probably be about right to say that the average for all seasons was 2/4 for a good workman and 1/4 for a bad one, per day actually worked. As regards women, who are engaged principally as weeders and whose wages are less affected by the grinding season, we may take the average at 1/3 for a good worker and 1/- for a bad worker. Children make from 1/3 to 1/- a day

This is the most accurate estimate that I can form after going through the pay sheets on many estates, and it refers to the early months of 1922, which, as already stated, were a period of great depression in the sugar industry. I may mention that during the same period I found that the current rate of daily wages paid to an ordinary agricultural labourer on the Government Farm at Onderneeming was 2/- a day while the Public Works Department was paying at rate of 3/- a day for temporary jobs. I may also add that I have excluded from consideration all cases of exceptionally high wages that I found in the pay sheets of the estates. I noticed a shovelman credited 28/6 for a week's work, and a good many over 20/-, while in one case a shovelman (a negro) was credited with 38/4 in a week. Women also, in some cases, appeared to earn wages up to 16/8 in a week. Such wages, however, were exceptional, and as I was unable to ascertain the exact circumstances in which they were earned, I exclude them from consideration.

33. The question how does this rate of wages work out with reference to the price of commodities and the standard of living current amongst the labouring classes in the Colony. In Appendix VII I have given a number of estimates of the cost of living as supplied by the Agent General for Immigration and by labourers themselves. It will be seen from the figures in Appendix VII that the Agent General for Immigration places the cost of living to a labourer at between 9/- and 10/- a week, and for a married couple at 13/2½, while the estimates supplied by the labourers themselves range from 9/6½ to 16/2 for a single man, and are about 20/- for a married couple. Now I can well believe that for a labourer who lives mainly on wheat (an imported article), and requires in addition meat, fish and a fairly liberal allowance of tobacco and condiments, the cost of living would amount to 15/- a week (*vide* Appendix VII, Case VI). But a man who is content to make rice his staple diet can have over 2½ lbs. of rice and 1½ lbs. of wheat and dhal a day, and yet keep the cost of his living below 10/- a week (*vide* Appendix VII, Case VII). At current wages a good workman can afford the more liberal scale of diet and comforts; but a man who, for any reason, has little capacity for work, finds it hard to make both ends meet. Even so, however, there should be no real privation at current rates of wages, where a man or a family, taken as a whole has a reasonable capacity for work. Major Alexander of the Salvation Army, who has worked for many years for the Indians in the Colony and who runs a boarding establishment for them in Georgetown, stated that he could board and lodge an adult male Indian well, giving him 3½ good meals a day, for 1/- a day. The wages certainly run to more than this for the men, and proportionately so for the women and children.

34. So far it has been assumed that the labourers on sugar estates are labourers pure and simple, that they spend the whole of their working week working for wages, and that they have no subsidiary means of livelihood. This, however, is not the case. The sugar estates make available 14,000 acres of rice land for 17,000 labourers on their estates, and 2,000 acres for growing ground provisions (yams, sweet potatoes, cassava, eddoes, tannias, bananas, maize, etc.). On many sugar estates where rice lands are not available the labourers hire plots of rice land outside the estate. In addition to

this many of the estates have fenced grazing areas on which their labourers can keep cattle, and many labourers avail themselves of this privilege. In this way the estate labourer becomes partly a small holder. Comparatively few work for hire for more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ days in the week, and at the seasons when the rice is transplanted or reaped most of the labourers are working for themselves for a fortnight or so on end. On many estates also firewood can be cut on the back lands and brought in by boat; and over most of the Colony fish are abundant and fishing a popular occupation. There can be no doubt that a man whose rice field provides him with enough rice for his family consumption and sometimes with rice to sell, whose "ground provision" plot provides him with vegetables, who gets his milk supply from his own cows and can catch fish in his spare moments, is in a much better position than the man who has to purchase all these things. There facilities, however, vary so much in different parts of the Colony that I find it impossible to estimate what may be the average advantage which they present to the labourer on the sugar estates, and can only record the opinion that this advantage is considerable.

35. To sum up the position as regards wages, the facts appear to be as follows. Prior to the war wages certainly permitted savings, and the best workmen did save on a considerable scale. In the sugar boom that occurred during the war wages were very good, savings were larger, and the standard of comfort went up. The present is a time of great depression. Wages are higher than before the war, but the difference is probably not so great as the difference in the cost of living. Wages now permit a good workman to live well up to his standard of comfort and in some cases to save a little, but the less efficient workers find life hard, and amongst them there is a good deal of distress. There is still a demand for more labour on some estates; but it is not easy for a labourer to take advantage of this, for want of suitable accommodation; so that the labourers on estates which have closed down often find it difficult to obtain work, and many who have savings are reluctant to accept the lower rate of wages now offered. The sudden change from abnormally good times to abnormally bad ones has caused general dissatisfaction.

CHAPTER V.—GENERAL SURVEY OF THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF INDIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

36. The position of Indians as land holders and as labourers has been considered, and it is now necessary to consider the economic position of the Indian community as a whole. The Indian community amounts to 124,000 persons, and is classified as follows in the Census returns for 1921.

Professional	..	..	..	..	..	..	350
Commercial	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,270
Industrial	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,481
Domestics	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,450
Agricultural	..	..	..	..	..	..	78,048
Unoccupied*	..	..	..	..	..	..	40,385

(*i.e., women engaged in domestic duties, children, etc.).

37. As regards the commercial activities of Indians the following table shows the trading licenses taken out by Indians in 1920, and gives some idea of the nature of the trade in which they engage.

Trading licenses taken out by Indians in 1920.

Spirit Shops	8
Provision Shops	575
Drug Shops	46
Cook Shops	25
Preaid Shops	6
Stores	61
Wine Shops	99
Indian Hens	23
Tobacco	629
Hucksters	1,189

The following table of other licenses taken out by Indians in 1920 also gives some idea of their material resources.

Carriages and carts (mostly donkey carts)	2,614
Motor cars	99
Motor cycles	3
Cycles	981
Sea and river-craft	7,925
Steam boilers	53
Dogs	903

38. As regards land held by Indians, it is not possible to give any exact figures because the Government records do not classify separately the lands held by the various communities. A list, however, was made out of 52 well-known Indians who each owned land of the estimated value of \$10,000 (= Rs. 30,000) and upwards, and it may be generally stated that Indians hold the bulk of the land under rice cultivation (61,000 acres), a fair proportion of the land under ground provisions and coconuts (45,000 acres), and also considerable areas of grazing land. In the matter of houses, leaving out of consideration the substantial bungalows of a few rich Indians, the houses of Indians in the villages varied from substantial wooden structures worth about \$1,000 apiece to primitive mud and wattle houses; but there were a large number of wooden houses worth a few hundred dollars.

Of the live stock in the Colony, Indians are said to be the largest cattle* owners, and to own a fair proportion of the other live stock (58,000, sheep, goats and pigs). They also keep poultry.

The rice-milling industry is in the hands of Indians who own a number of such mills.

* The total head of cattle in the Colony is officially returned as 105,000, but it is probably far larger.

39. The total capital investment of Indians in lands, houses, mills, trading and farming stock must be large. Apart from such capital invested, the following tables show the floating resources of the Indian community in British Guiana during the past six years.

FLOATING RESOURCES OF INDIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

(1) Land purchased by Indians in British Guiana.

Year.	No. of Purchasers				Total price paid.
					\$
1915 ..	"	"	413	"	90,809
1916 ..	"	"	557	"	150,216
1917 ..	"	"	630	"	204,850
1918 ..	"	"	703	"	240,723
1919 ..	"	"	807	"	453,605
1920 ..	"	"	852	"	379,949

(2) Accounts of Indians in Government Savings Bank.

Year.	No. of Depositors.				Total of Deposits.
					\$.
1915 ..	"	"	7,756	"	393,347
1916 ..	"	"	7,336	"	411,308
1917 ..	"	"	7,507	"	439,801
1918 ..	"	"	7,824	"	539,265
1919 ..	"	"	8,220	"	659,899
1920 ..	"	"	8,716	"	795,180

(3) Amounts deposited by Indians in the Savings Bank Departments of private banks, apart from larger amounts in the ordinary deposit and current accounts.

Bank.	Date.	Total of Deposits.
		\$
Colonial Bank ..	March, 1922 ..	275,588
Royal Bank of Canada ..	January 1st, 1921 ..	414,472
Royal Bank of Canada ..	January 1st, 1922 ..	376,709

(4) There are 27 Co-operative Credit Societies with a subscribed capital of \$40,420, in which Indians have a large share, and in which they deposit money freely.

(5) Remittance through Post Office by Indians to India.

Year.					Amount remitted.
					\$.
1915 ..	"	"	"	"	4,410
1916 ..	"	"	"	"	7,460
1917 ..	"	"	"	"	10,073
1918 ..	"	"	"	"	7,935
1919 ..	"	"	"	"	12,211
1920 ..	"	"	"	"	7,195

(6) *Money and Jewelry taken to India by Indian Immigrants repatriated to India.*

Year.	Number of Adult Immigrants	Money deposited with Immigration Agents for remittance to India.	Jewelry.
1919	814	\$76,023	\$12,670
1920	2,245	\$219,710	\$41,618

If, therefore, we take from the foregoing tables the figures of floating resources of Indians during the year 1920, we find that, apart from all previous investments in lands, houses, stock, etc., the following sum was left over to Indians after maintaining themselves.

Floating Resources of Indians in British Guiana.

	\$.
Money invested in land during 1920	379,919
Deposits in Government Savings Banks 1920	795,189
*Deposits in Savings Bank Department of Colonial Bank 1920.	275,588
Deposits in Savings Bank Department of Royal Bank of Canada 1920	414,472
Remittance by Post Office to India in 1920	7,195
Taken by repatriated immigrants in 1920	249,710
Taken by repatriated immigrants in 1920 (Jewelry).. ..	41,618
Total	<u>2,163,712</u>

40. How far the Indians in British Guiana hoard cash and ornaments, as they do in India, is hard to ascertain. In view of the habit which they have developed of depositing money in Savings Banks, I should imagine that the extent of hoarding is relatively much less than in India; but the custom is certainly prevalent to some extent, and from time to time cases are reported in the newspapers of thefts from Indians of hoarded cash and jewelry to the extent of \$300 or \$400 at a time.

41. The question next arises, how is the wealth distributed amongst the various grades of the Indian community. It is clear to any casual observer that there is a rich class, a very poor class, and a large intermediate class ranging from those enjoying solid prosperity to those just able

* The figure for deposits in the Savings Bank Department of the Colonial Bank on December 31st, 1920, was not available, but the figure given for March 1922 is approximately the same.

to pay their way and live in reasonable comfort ; but it is very difficult to give any numerical estimate of the distribution of wealth. I asked many competent persons for opinions on the subject, and the following are the best attempts at estimates which I got.

- (a) *Major Alexander of the Salvation Army.*
 - 50 per cent. of Indians successful.
 - 40 per cent. just earning a living.
 - 10 per cent. broken men, living from hand to mouth.
- (b) *Mr. J. W. Pirmal.*
 - 25 per cent. of Indians successful.
 - The rest living from hand to mouth.
- (c) *Mr. A. R. F. Webber (editor of a Labour newspaper).*
 - Somewhere between the estimates of Major Alexander and Mr. Pirmal.
- (d) *An intelligent Indian merchant.*
 - 25 per cent. well-to-do.
 - 50 per cent. paying their way in reasonable comfort, and saving money in good times.
 - 25 per cent. living in poverty.
- (e) *A missionary of long experience amongst Indians.*
 - 5 per cent. rich.
 - 10 per cent. comfortably off.
 - 15 per cent. submerged and living from hand to mouth.
 - 70 per cent. intermediate, ranging from those whose earnings enable them to live in fair comfort and save a little, to those whose earnings only just support them reasonably well.

In the above estimates there is a large measure of agreement, considering how vague and ill-defined are the limits which anyone may set between classes which can be considered as rich, poor, or comfortably off. So much depends on the standard of comfort in view. When it is remembered that these people were either immigrants themselves, or at the most, one or two generations removed from immigrants, and that the immigrants arrive in the Colony with no appreciable amount of property, the economic position is, I think, remarkable. Of the comparatively small rich class nothing need be said except to note that the Colony offers opportunities to a competent and careful man far greater than he would have in India. As regards the intermediate class of ordinary, hardworking, steady men, it is men of this class who put their money in the Savings Bank. If we assume that one-third of the Indian community (say) 40,000 persons, i.e., 10,000 families, have made in deposits of \$1 million (=Rs. 45 lakhs) which were in the Savings Banks at the end of 1920, it would

work out at an average of \$150 (=Rs. 450) a family. This is probably not far from the facts. Below this class come the men who though they may not run to a Savings Bank account, have a little money hoarded, a rice plot, a cow or two, or some other live stock.

42. It is necessary, however, to refer to the poorest class, the broken men described above as submerged and living from hand to mouth. It is not possible to give the exact proportion of these to the whole population, but whether they be put at 10 per cent. or at 25 per cent. of the whole, their case is bad. A sprinkling of them are to be found in all parts of the Colony, but it is in Georgetown that they collect in numbers and are most obvious. They go there to look for odd jobs and to beg; and they live largely in the streets. They are the men who from ill-health, incapacity or misfortune have been broken in the struggle. A large proportion of them are ganja smokers and rum drinkers. It is not surprising that some men should fail to make good. This occurs in any country, and still more so in any colony to which immigrants have been transplanted from their native surroundings. In this case, however, the break in institutions is more violent than is usually the case with emigrants of Western races. The Indian has been accustomed in his own country to the familiar institutions of the joint family, the caste organisation and the village community, to what has been termed "the beneficial co-operative rural life whereon the whole system of the civilisation of the Hindus has been immemorially based." Whatever may be the ultimate effects of such a system, it does, to some extent, secure the object aimed at, and offers several lines of defence to the people in their struggle with nature. The blows of fortune, which under an individualistic system would be borne by the individual, are borne by a group, and except in times of widespread distress it is not necessary for any government in India to organise poor-relief. In British Guiana the system is one of competitive individualism, pure and simple, and even the obligation of private charity is not recognised to the same extent as in India. An Indian working on a sugar estate aptly summed up the situation as follows:—"Who get money keepum; who no gottum go before"; which being interpreted means, "Every man for himself and devil take the hindmost." For the less competent life is hard, and the man who would resort to the seductive expedient of a running account with the village *bania*, as in India, is faced with the sign which stands over many provision shops in the Colony—"In God we trust; all others cash down." Under the competitive system the more competent Indians flourish exceedingly, and a large class reach a degree of comfort and independence which they could not hope to reach in India; but as a natural corollary the incompetent and unfortunate go under badly. It was no new experience to me to see Indians living in extreme poverty, nor did I see amongst the beggars in British Guiana such terrible sights as assail one in any Indian city; but the human wreckage of the Indian community which drifts about the Colony and congregates in Georgetown is a very pathetic sight. A Poor-House is maintained for those hopelessly broken; but I think that the Colony might do more for those one degree less broken, by maintaining a farm colony for them and by being more generous in providing free return passages to India for such as wish for them. Something also might be achieved by a more stringent control of the use of ganja and alcohol which frequently causes and generally aggravates the trouble.

CHAPTER VI—OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING THE WELL-BEING OF THE INDIAN IMMIGRANTS.

43. In this Chapter I propose to consider matters relating to the health and sanitation, medical and educational facilities in the Colony. The matters are technical ones regarding which I cannot claim to be an expert. In Appendices IV and V are given the figures of the Indian population analysed from various points of view, and the vital statistics for some years past. During the six years from 1915 to 1920 the average vital statistics were as follows for the Indian Community in British Guiana, viz—

	PER MILE.	
	Births.	Death.
Average of 6 years	28.1	35.3
Average of the period omitting the two influenza years 1918 and 1919.	30.5	29.2

During the period the corresponding figures in India were:—

	PER MILE.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Average of 6 years	25.4	30.8
Average of 6 years omitting the two influenza years 1918 and 1919.	36.8	30.6

It will be seen that the death rate amongst Indians in British Guiana is very similar to that amongst Indians in India, but the birth rate is much lower. This latter fact is due partly to the habits of Indians in British Guiana and partly to the excess of males over females. This excess is now 13,000 and in 1911 was 20,000. In former years it was greater. During the present century out of 33,000 Indian immigrants to British Guiana only 10,000 were females. This marked discrepancy between the number of males and the number of females is steadily becoming less as the proportion of Colony-born Indians rises. At present 68 per cent of the Indians were born in the Colony. The disproportion of numbers between the males and females, however, inevitably reduces the birth rate, while it does not reduce the death rate; and up to the present the position has been that without the arrival or fresh immigrants the Indian population in the Colony tends to diminish. It may now, perhaps, be taken as about stationary, and granting normal times, an increase may be looked for in the near future. Though the death rate in

British Guiana is comparable with that in India, it, of course, compares very unfavourably with that of the United Kingdom, which has an annual death rate of about 15 *per mille*.

44. The authorities in the Colony are alive to the significance of these figures and attribute the high death rate, directly and indirectly, to impure water supply which conduces to such diseases as enteric fever, dysentery and diarrhoea; to malaria which is prevalent in many places owing to the swampy nature of the soil; to filariasis, a disease spread by the mosquito; and to hook-worm (ankylostomiasis), due to faecal contamination of the soil.

45. As regards water supply it may be noted that, though water abounds in the coastal districts, the swamp water is very impure and bad for drinking purposes. In the past the two best sources of supply have been:—

- (a) Rainwater run off roofs of houses into cisterns by those who have large wooden or iron roofs.
- (b) River water brought in canals from the upper reaches of rivers in the coastal region.

Roof water is apt to be contaminated, and river water is usually of a brownish tinge, due to the colouring of vegetable matter in the forest regions from which it comes. This river water, brought down in open canals, is the general water supply of the Colony. It is not ideal, and is liable to contamination in the open canal, but it is a fairly healthy supply; and when the canal is well guarded and the water is specially treated, it may be regarded as satisfactory. In villages and settlements where there is no drinking water canal the water supply is often very bad, though on the rivers and creeks the water from the middle of the river is reputed to be wholesome. Nine years ago boring for artesian water was started, and such water has been tapped at depths varying from 300 to 1,000 feet in 27 cases. Some excellent artesian wells exist, to the great advantage of the people, and it is proposed to extend such operations as funds permit.

46. In the matter of malaria the problems is similar to that in India, and resolves itself into questions of surface drainage and the use of quinine. The question of drainage has been considered in Chapter I; but I do not see how the eradication of malaria by this means can ever be considered as a practicable proposition for a country with the physical characteristics of the coastal tract of British Guiana. Quinine is supplied free at schools and sold cheap at post offices, and is supplied free of cost by the sugar estates to their labourers. Cholera and yellow fever are absent and small-pox very rare. The devastating effect of the influenza epidemic which went round the world in 1918-19 is shown by a mortality of between 6,000 and 7,000, attributed to this cause, giving an incident of mortality which is, I understand, comparable with that in India at the same time.

47. The medical and sanitary authorities publish reports and elaborate statistics which read very much like similar publications in India, but I am not competent to offer any definite opinions on such matters. In the matter of

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malaria which I imagine to be much the most serious evil in the Colony, I would hazard the opinion that the situation of the coastal tract is very similar to that in the Bombay Konkan. Close to the coast the tract is usually healthy, sometimes remarkably so, but as you get further back malaria increases, and in the regions of swampy jungle at the back of the alluvial belt I understand that it is very bad.

48. There is a Government Medical staff of 36 doctors, and the total number of qualified doctors in the Colony is 53. There is also a staff of dispensers, who, after a period of service in a hospital, often set up drug stores of their own. Of Government medical institutions there are six public hospitals with dispensaries attached, eight dispensaries, a lunatic asylum and a leper asylum. At these hospitals and dispensaries treatment can be obtained on payment of a fee or free, of charge by those who obtain a certificate of poverty. There are also some thirty hospitals under the control of the sugar-estate authorities at which those working on the sugar estates are entitled to free treatment and free diet, as prescribed by the doctor, during the time that they are in hospital. I inspected a number of such hospital and considered them to be satisfactory. Hospital and medical facilities are much more readily available in British Guiana than they are in India.

49. The only other Government activities which need be mentioned here are the Alms House in Georgetown where 788 paupers are maintained, of whom half are Indians, and the grant of out-door relief to the poor. The number of poor persons so relieved in 1919 was 1,809 adults and 1,609 children.

50. In theory education is compulsory in the Colony to all between the ages of 6 and 14 in urban districts, and between the ages of 6 and 12 in the rural districts. Attendance for 12½ days a month in the former districts and for 7½ days a month in the latter, satisfies the law. In practice it is not found possible to enforce this regulation completely, and the percentage of children within the compulsory limits to be found on the school registers is only 80 per cent, for boys and 64 per cent. for girls. Warnings are issued every year in some 3,000 or 4,000 cases to parents who do not send their children to school and in 1919 convictions for this offence were obtained in 2,000 cases; but the fines inflicted are small and amounted, on the average, to less than Re. 1 each. Apparently, however, the children who do attend school are present on far more days than the law requires, since the average attendance is well over half the number of children on the books. If parents wish to keep their children at school between the ages of 12 and 14 the law provides that they should pay the teacher 4 cents (2 annas) a week. It is found that, on reaching the age of 12, 96 per cent of the children are withdrawn from school; and of the fees which are payable for the residue kept at school between the ages of 12 and 14 the proportion which remains unpaid is not less than 95 per cent. The teacher is unwilling to attempt to enforce the payment in any case, since it would mean that the child would be withdrawn from school. There are 224 Government primary schools, besides the schools of the Canadian mission where some 1,000 children are educated. Half the population of the Colony above the age of 5 are said to be literate. Indians appear to be the class which takes least advantage of the education offered. Less than 8,000 Indian children attended the primary schools in 1919 out of a total number of 34,000

pupils. Thus while the Indian community forms more than one third of the population, they send to school less than one quarter of the total number of pupils. Over half of the teachers are women. 30 per cent. of the teachers are certificated. Amongst the teachers are 15 Indians of whom 6 are certificated. The standard of teaching at the schools is not considered to be high, but the general housing and management of the schools appeared to me to be satisfactory. There are 11 secondary schools providing for 900 pupils, an industrial school which provides for 160; and at the Queen's College in Georgetown a high class education can be obtained.

51. There is one institution in the Colony to which reference must be made, which exists for the benefit of immigrants. This is the Immigration Department. It consists of the Agent General for Immigration, who is stationed at Georgetown where he has an Assistant and the headquarter office, and two other Assistants stationed at Berbice and Suddie, respectively. The duties of this Department are to make all arrangements for the arrival from and departure to India of immigrants; and in former days its duty was to watch and control the working of the laws and regulations relating to indentures. Now that indentures have been abolished, a considerable part of its duties and powers have gone; but the Agents of this Department still have a mass of work to do in connection with complaints which are made by Indians regarding their dealings with other Departments of Government, Local Boards, Sugar Estates and other employers. They wind up estates of deceased immigrants, when necessary, take charge of immigrant orphans and interest themselves in destitute immigrants. Number of applications for interventions in purely domestic matters are also made to this Department by immigrants. The powers which it exercises as regards the settlement of disputes are not very extensive; but it does what it can, and its influence brings a considerable advantage to immigrants. Now that indentures have been abolished and wages are settled entirely by the play of economic forces, the operations of this Department must tend largely to become those of a Labour Bureau; and I think that it is desirable that this should be recognized, and the work of the Department deliberately organized on this basis; but the time has certainly not yet come when the Department can afford to give up the activities of a paternal nature which it now performs for immigrant Indians.

PART II.

EXAMINATION OF COLONIZATION SCHEMES.

CHAPTER VII.—COMPARISON OF SCHEMES, AND EXAMINATION OF THE ONLY AUTHORITY ONE.

52. With regard to the second of the terms of reference, we were confronted at the beginning of our enquiry with a difficulty; and to explain this difficulty clearly it is necessary to go into some detail. In 1916, the Government of British Guiana was informed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that His Majesty's Government had assented to the recommendations of the Government of India that indentured immigration to the Colony of British Guiana should be abolished, but that it would be allowed for another five years

In 1917, the Government of British Guiana was informed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that immigration of Indians to British Guiana was to cease immediately, and that no further immigration under the old system would take place. It was also intimated that no further immigration from India to any Colony would be permitted under any new scheme unless the Colony agreed to cancel all existing indentures. In accordance with the orders referred to above, immigration into British Guiana from India in immigrant ships came to an end in April 1917. In January 1919, a General Colonization Committee was formed in British Guiana, consisting of members of the Combined Court and other members co-opted to represent all interests and races, to consider a scheme for future immigration into the Colony. Numerous sub-committees and branches of sub-committees were formed to consider the labour needs of the various industries, to explore all possible sources from which immigrants might be drawn and to mature a scheme to secure future immigration. In February 1919, the Combined Court (i.e., legislature) of British Guiana passed a Resolution "requesting the Governor to make arrangements to send to the United Kingdom a deputation consisting of members of various races in the Colony, with the view of laying before His Majesty's Government a representation of the needs of the Colony both for the maintenance of the present industries and for their extension: and to show the advantage which the Colony affords to immigrants from other countries." The Combined Court also pledged itself to find the funds necessary for sending such a deputation, the work of which was to be based on the lines to be recommended by the General Colonization Committee. The sub-committees appointed submitted reports and on 14th April 1919 the Governor was presented with the report of the General Colonization Committee, which consisted of the Final Report of the "Proposals and Finance Sub-Committee" and he made remarks on it. A report of the whole proceedings referred to above has been published in a compilation entitled "British Guiana—Colonization Scheme". Meantime the Delegates were selected and sailed for England in June 1919. After deliberations in the United Kingdom, five of the Delegates proceeded to India in October 1919. An account of their operations in India is contained in a report by Mr. T. Greenwood published in March, 1920. Apart from this report, another publication entitled "British Guiana Imperial Colonization Scheme" was issued by Dr. Wharton and Mr. Luckhoo, the two Indian Delegates who proceeded to India. A pamphlet entitled "British Guiana and the Empire" signed by Messrs. Greenwood, Murray, Dias and Nunan was also issued. The scheme, however, which the Government of India appears to have regarded as authoritative was the scheme entitled "Summary of British Guiana Colonization Scheme" which was apparently drawn up by Dr. Nunan, the Chairman of the British Guiana Delegation, and is printed as an accompaniment to Resolution No. 1873 of 7th May 1920 of the Government of India, Department of Commerce. It was this scheme which was considered by the Committee of the Imperial Legislative Council early in 1920 when they also interviewed Dr. Nunan and Mr. Luckhoo as the accredited representatives of the deputation from British Guiana.

53 It was to examine this scheme that we were sent out to British Guiana. Upon our arrival in British Guiana we were informed by His Excellency the Governor that the scheme put forward by Dr. Nunan to the Committee of the

Imperial Legislative Council at Delhi in 1920 was not authoritative or official ; and he presented to us, in substitution of Dr. Nunan's scheme, another scheme entitled " British Guiana Colonization Scheme. Information for intending Colonists. As forwarded by Colonial Office to India Office." This was supplemented by a Memorandum. The Scheme and Memorandum are given in Appendix VIII. His Excellency further informed us that the terms of this scheme cannot be regarded as a definite offer, but must be regarded in the nature of a proposal for discussion. In this connection, therefore, all that I can do is to note the salient points of these two schemes and the principal points in which they differ, and to consider the scheme of His Excellency the Governor of British Guiana in the light of a tentative offer.

54. I may note in the first place that both the schemes put forward by Dr. Nunan and that now shown to us by His Excellency the Governor were prepared in 1920 when sugar prices were very high, and wages in British Guiana were also much higher than the normal, while the present time is one of very low sugar prices, and wages also have fallen greatly. The figures of wages, therefore, as mentioned in both these schemes, cannot be taken as applicable to the present time or as normal.

55. The following shows in tabular form the main proposals made in these two schemes, and indicates the main differences that exist between the two schemes.

Dr. Nunan's proposals.

His Excellency the Governor's proposal.

(1) Direct Settlement.

Indian settlers to be emigrated in families to British Guiana with the help of free passages, to get land assigned to them on the ordinary, existing, easy terms, to receive assistance in selecting their land, and to receive financial assistance to enable them to set up as small farmers.

Indian settlers to be emigrated in families to British Guiana with the help of free passages. Any immigrant may take up land on the ordinary terms if he is in a position to do so. The Government of British Guiana is prepared "to give grants of Crown Land" to immigrants on arrival in the Colony who have some means of their own and are in a position to settle at once as independent small farmers. The Government may be willing to make money advances to such settlers when the financial situation permits.

If immigrants come to British Guiana at their own expense the Government would be willing to make more liberal grants of land and might be willing to contribute to the cost of preparing such land and erecting buildings.

(2) Immigrants who come to work as hired labourers in the first instance.

If the settler prefers to accept employment to begin with, the Government of British Guiana guarantee him work at local rates together with housing accommodation, garden plot and grazing privileges.

Wages are sufficient to enable immigrants to live comfortably and to save money, and are to be controlled by Arbitration Boards.

Immigrants to receive employment with registered employers, if they desire such employment at the outset, at current rates of wages, free housing, hospital and medical treatment for three years, and certain concessions with regard to rations and milk for women and children.

Dr. Kinnan's proposals.

His Excellency the Governor's proposals.

(3) *Reward grants of land.*

Reward grants of 5 acres of coast or river land, specially protected by embankments from flood, prepared for irrigation, drainage and cultivation, will be given to families who have completed three years of residence in the Colony, during which they have been engaged either for themselves or for employers in any form of agricultural work in the Colony. To make such lands available the Colony is prepared to spend \$1½ million. Further assistance will be given as regards housing accommodation and farming equipment.

A special Reward Grant of land, protected from or not liable to floods, drained and suitable for cultivation of 5 acres to the head of the colonist family of, of two acres to a single colonist (man or woman) whose the claimant has engaged in any form of agriculture under a registered employer for three years continuously. The cost of preparing these lands will be borne by the Government of the Colony. The title to such land will be conditional on the fulfilment of the requirements of the British Guiana Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation. The fees payable will be five annual payments of \$1 per acre, each made in advance at the beginning of each year.

(4) *Repatriation.*

- (a) Free after 7 years' residence.
- (b) At ½ of the cost of the passage after 5 years' residence.
- (c) At ½ the cost of the passage after 3 years' residence.
- (d) Free at any time (under certain conditions) if the supervising officer of the Government of India so direct.

- (a) Free after 7 years' residence.
- (b) At ¼ of the cost of the passage or £7 10s. whichever is the less, after 5 years' residence.
- (c) At ½ the cost of the passage, or £15, whichever is the less, after three years' residence. In the case of colonists' children the above amounts are halved.
- (d) Free at any time, if the supervising officer of the Government of India or the Chief Colonization Officer so direct.

N.B.—It is doubtful whether the Legislature would be willing to assume the obligation to give free passages back to India in the case of immigrants who did not serve for a minimum period under registered employers; but it would probably agree to repatriate any immigrants whom the representative of the Indian Government in the Colony might for special cause deem it desirable to repatriate.

(5) *Supervising Officer.*

The Government of India to appoint its own supervising officer in the Colony, at the cost of the Colony.

The Government of India to have a supervising officer in the Colony. (It is not stated who is to pay for this officer, but the Colony could bear the cost only if the expenditure were sanctioned by the Combined Court of British Guiana).

56. Now comparing these two schemes, the most obvious differences are that while in the first scheme all immigrants who are engaged in agricultural work are to qualify in three years for Reward Grants of land, and all immigrants are to qualify for repatriation, under the second scheme only such

immigrants as work for a registered employer are eligible for these benefits. In the first scheme confidence is expressed as to funds being available for the purposes indicated, while the wording of the second scheme is more guarded in this respect. Apart from this, however, the general suggestion of the first scheme is that the bulk of the immigrants are to be settled directly on the land on arrival in the Colony, while the assumption in the second scheme is that the great bulk of the immigrants will, in the first instance, have to work as labourers for registered employers. It is for this reason that Dr. Nunan's scheme is regarded by many in the Colony as a "Colonization Schemes," while His Excellency the Governor's scheme is regarded as a "labour scheme." Many public bodies and individuals brought this distinction to our notice, and a strong body of opinion declared itself in favour of a colonization scheme, and not in favour of a labour scheme. I consider, however, that this is a distinction which denotes no practical difference, since investigations have made it clear that there is at present no unoccupied land available in British Guiana in such a condition and situation as would offer any prospect of success to Indian immigrants who might attempt to settle upon it immediately on their arrival in the colony as independent peasant farmers. The scheme put forward by Dr. Nunan and his colleagues appears to have been based upon a misapprehension of the physical facts which govern the agricultural situation, and upon a mistaken idea of what the Colony could afford. It therefore remains for me to examine the scheme now put forward by His Excellency the Governor, remembering that this scheme is only a tentative one, and that on matters of policy and finance the Court of Policy and the Combined Court have the last word in British Guiana.

57. Now the scheme which appears to me to be the most attractive, and which I imagine would appeal most to public opinion in India, is a scheme which would provide for the immediate settlement on suitable land, as small holders, of the Indian immigrants. It must, however, be recognised that the circumstances would have to be very unusual in any colony to enable the government to settle immediately on the land, as independent farmers, all immigrants who might choose to come, whether they were possessed of capital and agricultural skill, or not. I know of no colony which attempts to work any such miracle. The circumstances in British Guiana are exceptional; and in Chapter X I suggest a scheme, which appears to me to be both workable and attractive, whereby selected Indian cultivators, without any appreciable capital, but possessed of agricultural skill, might be settled immediately on their arrival on excellent land, with good prospects of success. The scheme put forward by His Excellency the Governor, on the other hand, provides for the immigration of any class of Indian immigrants, as in former times, and assumes that most of the immigrants will, of necessity, work for wages when they first arrive, and it guarantees to them work with selected employers. It assumes that during a period of three years they will learn the conditions of the country, acquire some agricultural skill and save little money; and at the end of three years of such work it offers them grants of suitable land. For such as do not wish to remain in the Colony it offers repatriation on far more generous terms than have existed in the past. I think that the terms offered are as good as the physical and economic facts of the situation at present make it

possible to offer. The question is whether they are sufficiently attractive from the point of view of the Indian immigrant. In Chapter V it has been shown that in the past a large number of the Indian immigrants have reached affluence and competence, and apart from the old system of indenture with its objectionable penal clauses, which has now been abolished, the two chief difficulties have been that men who had done well as labourers and who wished to take up land were often unable to obtain suitable land, while men who did badly as labourers and who wished to return to India were in many cases unable to get repatriated. The scheme now put forward offers suitable land-holdings after three years service to such as wish to settle, or in the alternative guarantees repatriation, free of cost, after 7 years, which is a great improvement on the existing arrangement by which repatriation is granted only after 10 years service, and then at a charge of $\frac{1}{2}$ the cost of the passage in the case of males and $\frac{3}{4}$ the cost of the passage in the case of females. I have referred to the holdings mentioned in this offer as "suitable" holdings; by which I mean that they appear to be suitable, inasmuch as the terms of the offer are that they are to be immune from flooding, drained and suitable for cultivation. The location of such lands has not been settled; so it was not possible to see them, nor is it possible to express any opinion about them except as regards what appears from the terms of the offer. There is, however, plenty of rich land which could be put into condition suitable for the formation of small holdings by means of empoldering operations and the construction of roads. This is merely a matter of cost, and the Colonial Government say that they have funds for the purpose and are prepared to spend them.

58. Amongst the labouring classes in the Colony there was a good deal of opposition to this scheme, since it was thought that the effect of importing fresh labour would be to keep down wages. Further, the labourers, both Indians and those of African race, objected to concessions being offered to newcomers which were not offered to themselves. Such objections are natural. Care should certainly be taken to see that labour is not imported in excess of requirements; and at a time of great depression, as at present, it would be disastrous to flood the country with surplus labour. It seems to me, however, that it is unlikely that the Colonial Government would attempt to do anything so prejudicial to its own interests. Further it is capital which employs labour, and nothing will do so much to attract fresh capital to the Colony, for the development of its undoubted resources, as the knowledge that labour can be obtained. For greater security it would be desirable that the Government of India should have a supervising officer in the Colony, to advise them regarding the demand for labour at any time, and the wages available, so that the supply of labour might be regulated in accordance with circumstances. The scheme put forward suggests the appointment of such an officer. To make the labour situation clear to the supervising officer and to others it would be desirable that figures of wages and cost of living should be worked out at frequent intervals in the Colony, and the demand for labour estimated. Subject to these safeguards I think that the scheme proposed by His Excellency the Governor of British Guiana is a suitable one and would provide favourable terms for Indian Immigrants. The scheme is put forward tentatively for discussion, and I think that it merits favourable consideration.

PART III.

THE NECESSITY FOR FURTHER GUARANTEES REGARDING THE STATUS OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS.

CHAPTER VIII.—EXAMINATION OF THE STATUS OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS.

59. *Political Status.*—The Government of British Guiana consists of a Governor, an Executive Council, a Court of Policy and a Combined Court. The Court of Policy and the Combined Court between them exercise the ordinary functions of a parliament or legislative assembly, the former passing laws, the latter exercising financial control. The Court of Policy consists of the Governor, seven official members and eight elected members. The Combined Court consists of the members of the Court of Policy, together with six elected financial representatives. In practice it usually works out that the official members have a majority in the Court of Policy, and the elected members in the Combined Court. The latter, by holding the power of the purse, can control the colonial policy to a great extent, and can block government action of which it does not approve, by cutting off supplies.

Subject to a property qualification anyone who is eligible as a voter is eligible for election to the Court of Policy or the Combined Court.

60. Any male person is entitled to a vote who—

(1) Has attained the age of 21 years.

(2) Is under no legal incapacity.

(3) Is a British subject by birth or naturalization.

(4) Possesses the following property qualifications:—

(a) ownership of not less than three acres of land;

or (b) ownership of a house, or house and land, of the annual rental or value of not less than \$96;

or (c) occupation or tenancy of not less than six acres of land;

or (d) occupation or tenancy of a house, or a house and land, of an annual rental or value of not less than \$192;

or (e) possession of an annual income or salary of not less than \$180;

or (f) payment of direct taxes to the extent of \$20, or upwards.

61. Subject to the above, the only disqualification for being a voter, worth recording, is in the case of a man who cannot read and write some language. It will thus be seen that the qualifications for the franchise are literacy and a low property qualification. No distinction of any kind is made between the different races in the Colony; but the various races make use of the franchise to an extent which varies greatly. Out of 38,600 adult males of the black and coloured population 3,460 are registered voters, while out of 41,000 adult male Indians only 500 are registered voters. The Blacks form 68 per cent of the electorate, the Indians, who are the larger community, form only 8 per cent. Why is this? Amongst the immigrant Indians a large proportion is wholly illiterate in any language; but amongst the Indians born in the Colony (68 per cent of the Indian community) the great majority are literate, and large

numbers of Indians certainly have the property qualification. The reason why there are not more registered Indian voters is that the majority of Indians in British Guiana have up to the present not been interested in politics and have not taken the trouble to get their names registered. Thus while 8 per cent. of the adult males of the Black and Coloured population have registered their names as voters, only 1 per cent. of the Indians have done so. The result is that the Black and Coloured vote controls the political situation, and the weight of the Indian vote is almost negligible.

At the present time, however, the Indian community is waking up to its opportunities in this respect, and various Indian organizations are inducing more Indians to register their names. There is no Indian member of the Court of Policy, and only one Indian member of the Combined Court.

62. It will be realised that Indians in the Colony do not exercise political influence in any degree proportionate to their numbers; but it is recognised by them generally that the remedy for this lies in their own hands. In this connection it is worth while to quote a paragraph from the address presented to us by "The British Guiana East Indian Association," the most important Indian political association in the Colony, viz:—"As members of the community in general, with whom we live in harmony and good fellowship, we are also pleased to state that we enjoy equal political and municipal rights and the other privileges of British citizenship, as well as freedom in the exercise of our religious rites and practices." It was alleged, on one occasion, that in some cases Indians were debarred from registering themselves as voters on the ground that they were not literate in English, although the law provides that literacy in any language is sufficient. During the period of our stay in the Colony the Government of British Guiana had an enquiry made regarding this allegation, with the result that the facts alleged were not substantiated in any case. Various suggestions were made to us for altering the electoral system of the Colony with a view to give Indians greater political preponderance than at present. It was suggested that a system of communal representation or of proportionate representation should be introduced, that the literacy test should be abolished, the property qualification lowered, and that various changes should be made in the details of the electoral system. I think, however, that the Indian community generally appreciated the fact that they had political rights equal to those of any other community, and that the reason why they did not exercise greater political power was that they neglected to use the rights which they possessed. I have no recommendations to make for any change in the electoral system, nor do I know how far the Colonial government would be prepared to agree to any specific proposal put before it; but I am satisfied that it is the intention of the constitution to give equal rights of representation to all communities; and if it is found that, in any details, the present arrangements do not secure this object, I believe that the Government would be prepared to make the changes of detail necessary to secure it, if the Indian community were to represent the matter.

63. As regards the social, legal and religious status of Indians in the Colony, all races are on an equality, and it is open to Indians, as to others, to live anywhere and in any way that they can afford, and to carry on any occupation that they may desire. There is some rivalry, and in places perhaps hostility between the Indians and the Blacks: but on the whole the two communities

get on fairly well together. It is also open to anyone to follow any religion that he may desire. There are 100 Hindu temples and Mahomedan mosques in the colony, and the authorities of the Sugar estates give facilities for the building of such. The only matters in this connection brought to our notice which require mention are the following.

64. *Marriage Laws.*—The position is briefly this. Indians can be married by their own priests and in accordance with their own rites, but such marriages are not legally recognised unless they are notified to a Marriage Registrar. It is claimed that such notification is necessary to enable the authorities to record the marriages, and that if marriages are not officially recorded the authorities are not in a position to recognise them. On the other hand, it is urged by some members of the Indian community that they do not have to notify marriages in India, and should not have to do so in British Guiana. The point in connection with which the matter often assumes importance is this. If an Indian dies intestate and leaves property, but, according to the official marriage register, has no wife in the Colony, enquiries are made regarding his relatives in India, and if these can be traced, the property is consigned to them, though the deceased may have children living in the Colony who are not regarded as legitimate because no marriage has been registered. Cases have occurred where this has happened, and such cases constitute a grievance. If no relatives can be traced in India the property is made over to the children of the deceased, though they have no legal status, as a matter of grace and not as a matter of right. On the one side, it may be argued that it is an easy matter for Indians to notify their marriages if they wish to do so. On the other side, it is regarded as a hardship that the children of a permanent marriage, considered by the Indian community to be binding, should be treated as illegitimate and debarred from inheriting their father's property, simply because the marriage was never registered. The difficulty appears to be this. The marriage customs of Indians in British Guiana are in a state of transition. The older generation adhere to the custom of child-marriage and marry off their children in childhood, with or without notification to the Marriage Registrar; but when the children grow older, they are often not content to abide by the choice of their parents, and seek fresh unions of their own choice. In the freer life of the Colony women have a position of far more independence than they have in India, and it is stated that as many as 75 per cent. of the girls married in childhood seek fresh unions in later life. If the marriage originally conducted by Indian priests was never notified, these later unions can be legalized. If the original marriage was notified the later union cannot be legalized, so long as both the original contracting parties are alive. The matter, therefore, is one of considerable difficulty. His Excellency the Governor invited the opinion of the Indian delegation on the subject, and opinions were expressed by the Indian members of the Delegation. I understand that the view of His Excellency the Governor is that he would be prepared to recognize any marriage which is of a permanent nature, but is not prepared to recognize as marriages unions of a temporary nature. The matter is not one on which I feel competent to make any recommendation.

65. *Law of Inheritance.*—In British Guiana inheritance is governed by English Law. It was suggested by some Indians that for Hindus and Mahom-

medans inheritance should be governed by their own personal laws. I have heard the case fully stated, and the demand appeared to be confined to a few people; indeed I presume that the bulk of the Indians in the Colony have no experience of Hindu or Mahomedan law. Now Hindu law would work as in the circumstances of the Colony, where joint families are unknown and caste not observed, I do not know; nor do I suppose that the Civil Courts in British Guiana would be in a position to administer such law. The question was raised, however, so I mention it.

66 *Cremation of the dead.*—A demand was made to us that it should be made lawful for Hindus to cremate their dead, in accordance with Hindu rites; and it was brought to our notice that some years ago a Hindu resident in Georgetown had applied to the Municipal authorities for permission to cremate a corpse and had received a reply to the effect that there was no provision of law by which this can be done. There is no law against it; but no provision has been made for burning grounds, while provision has been made for burial grounds; so that burial is the universal custom. The matter was referred to His Excellency the Governor who expressed the opinion that if the Indian community were to represent the matter there would be no difficulty in making the requisite provision.

PART IV.

OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

CHAPTER IX.—OPINIONS AND GRIEVANCES OF INDIANS BROUGHT TO OUR NOTICE.

67. I now propose to consider the principal opinions expressed to us by Indians on the subject of our delegation, and the grievances put forward by them, in the many formal and informal interviews that we had.

68. *Renewed Immigration from India.*—Opinions were freely expressed in favour of a colonization scheme and against a labour scheme. This matter has been fully discussed in Chapter VII. It was also urged that no more Indians should be brought for settlement on the land until extensive drainage and irrigation works had been carried out. The problems of drainage and irrigation have been discussed in Chapters I and III.

69. *The Rice Industry.*—The industries of rice growing, rice milling and rice dealing in British Guiana are almost entirely in Indian hands. The rice industry is a large one, and its rapid extension in recent years is shewn by the figures given in Appendix III. When the world-wide shortage of food supplies occurred in 1919, and the prices of grain went up with a bound, it was considered necessary, with a view to safeguard the food supply of the Colony and to keep down the cost of living, to prohibit the export of rice from British Guiana except under license. This naturally hit the rice grower and the rice dealer, since the overseas market for their produce was cut off, and the price of rice fell. It was also alleged that dealers were left with large stocks of grain on their hands, some of which rotted for want of a ready market. Indians interested in the rice industry are very indignant with the action of Government, and many who agree that some limitation of export was necessary

contentd that the restrictions were too drastic and were maintained too long. It certainly was hard on the large rice growers to be faced simultaneously with the very high rate of wages current in the Colony at that time and an artificially lowered price for their produce. The problem is one which India had to face at the same time, and the expedient adopted in both cases was the same. The profits of the rice grower in British Guiana were curtailed, just as the profits of the Burma rice grower and the Punjab wheat grower were in India. But in British Guiana the large rice grower had to face a much larger rise in wages than the employers of labour in India had to face. It is not for me to criticize the rice policy of the Colonial Government, but in view of my experience as Director of Civil Supplies in Bombay, I can well believe that the control of rice in British Guiana gave rise to hardship and abuses. The rice growers in British Guiana regard the action of Government as an attack on a typical Indian Industry. All restrictions on the export of rice have now been removed.

70. *Cattle*.—An analogous grievance exists with regard to cattle. The number of cattle in the Colony is estimated at 105,000, and the cattle returns of recent years appear to show that the number is tending to decline. The figures are admittedly only rough estimates, and many competent observers maintain that the number is far larger than that recorded, and that the alleged decline is purely imaginary. However this may be, the idea became prevalent that something must be done to prevent any diminution in the number of cattle; and the expedient adopted was to stop the export of cattle and to prohibit the slaughter of cows except in such cases as a certificate could be obtained from a veterinary surgeon to the effect that a cow was useless for breeding purposes. The inevitable effect of this legislation was to depress the cattle-breeding industry. Indians are the chief cattle owners in the Colony and speak bitterly of the loss which they have sustained by this legislation. I think that they have a very genuine grievance in this respect. Such legislation certainly has deterred people from taking up the cattle industry and has discouraged those engaged in it; indeed it was bound to produce a result the opposite to that aimed at, and it has done so. In India there are people who clamour for similar legislation; but in British Guiana, where they have tried, the Indian people clamour for its repeal. So far, however, these regulations remain in force, and constitute a standing Indian grievance, and, I think, a valid one.

71. *Appointments in Government service*.—Some of the higher appointments in the Civil Service, the Police and the technical departments of British Guiana are filled by members of the Colonial Services who are liable to be transferred to other British Colonies such as Hongkong, Cyprus, Mauritius, Nigeria, etc. Such appointments are made in England. Apart from these, appointments to Government service in the Colony are made locally, and in theory are open to any qualified man. It is alleged that in practice Indians do not get a fair share of such appointments; and it certainly is a fact that the number of Indians in Government service is not proportionate to their numbers in the Colony. This is, no doubt, due partly to the fact that Indians are the least educated ingredient in the community. Of the immigrant Indians (32 per cent. of the Indian community) the bulk are illiterate in any language, and hardly any know English. Further the Indian community, as a whole, send fewer

children to school than do the Blacks and the coloured people. A fair sprinkling of Indians is to be found in the medical, educational and Police Departments, and in Government offices of various kinds; and I found Indians working in the chemical and botanical branches of the Agricultural Department; but there are few Indians in the superior Government posts in the Colony; and, such as there are, are mainly found in the Medical Department. The number of Indians in the Colony qualified for superior posts is relatively small, and the pay of Government posts in British Guiana is also small. Educated Indians are probably doing much better in trade and in the learned professions than they would do in Government service. It is quite possible, however, that Indians might obtain a greater share in the scramble for Government service if they carried more political weight in the Colony. So far they have neglected their political opportunities, as has been shown in Chapter VIII; and to this extent the remedy is in their own hands. Educated Indians, however, put forward claims to special treatment in this respect, and as an example of such claims I do not think that I can do better than quote the views of Mr. J. H. Luckhoo who gave evidence as President of the British Guiana East Indian National Congress, and who is the only Indian who has a seat in the Combined Court. He claims that:—

- (1) All positions in Government service shall be open to Indians.
- (2) 40 per cent. of the posts in the Civil Service, from Heads of Departments downwards, shall be reserved for Indians.
- (3) All posts in the Immigration Department shall be reserved for Indians.
- (4) Where Indians competent to fill these posts cannot be found in British Guiana, they shall be brought from India for the purpose.

I think it unlikely that the Colonial Government would agree to these proposals, and am unable to make any recommendation in the matter.

72. *Languages Taught in the Schools.*—English is the language of the Colony, and instruction in the schools is imparted in this language. Indians desire that Indian vernaculars also shall be taught. They are said to be six Indian vernaculars used by Indians in the Colony, but almost all the Indians, talk English of some kind, the rising generation are receiving their school instruction in English, and in the towns there are many Indians of all classes who no know other language but English, which they talk freely and correctly. In some schools Hindustani is taught to Indian children as an optional subject, but this instruction does not amount to very much. The Government is anxious to meet this demand of the Indian community so far as they can; but additional instruction involves additional cost; and it is difficult to introduce instruction in the Indian vernaculars without reducing the amount of other education, which is none too much at present. In the real interests of Indians in the Colony I would deprecate any attempt to substitute education in Indian vernaculars for education in English, since it would inevitably operate against their natural aspirations to take their full share in the life of an English-speaking Colony. In the circumstances of British Guiana difference of language is probably the cause, more than any other, which tends towards the feeling of difference of status; and so long as Indians strive to remain a people apart from

the other communities, it is difficult to see how this feeling can be entirely eradicated. Indeed several Indian emigrants complained to me that they wished to join the Police Department, but were not eligible as they did not know English. This was hard on them, but inevitable under the circumstances.

73. *Cost of Return Passages.*—The provisions regarding repatriation which now affect the great majority of the Indian immigrants who wish to return to India amount briefly to this. All immigrants introduced into the Colony at the expense of Government or the Immigration Fund after September 1898 are required to pay as follows for their return passages :—

Men, half the fare ;

Women, one-third of the fare ;

Children accompanying their parents, free ;

Orphans, free generally ;

Paupers, free (*vide* below).

Payment has also to be made for the warm clothing required on the journey by those returning to India. Immigrants wishing for repatriation have to notify their wish to the Immigration Office and pay in their share of the passage. Provision is then made for them so far as steamers can be secured and accommodation is available. Paupers are apparently provided for last, and repatriated as spare accommodation occurs. During the years 1915-18 no steamers could be secured for repatriating Indians ; but during the years 1919-21 the following Indians have been repatriated, *viz.* :—

Adult males	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,983
Adult females	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,001
Boys	..	..	..	..	..	..	296
Girls	..	..	..	..	..	..	345
Total							3,625

including 221 paupers. Only those who have been for 10 years in the Colony are entitled to assisted return passages. Those who have been in the Colony for less than 10 years can secure repatriation on these ships after the rest have been provided for, on payment of the full fare. Before the war the charge for a passage from British Guiana to India varied from £10 to £16, according to whether the ship was fully filled or not. The charge for a passage now varies between £25 and £38, and the result is that whereas between 1902 and 1910 the price that had to be paid was \$63, of which the returning male immigrant was asked to pay half, *viz.* : \$31½ plus \$5 for clothing, total \$36½, the price that now has to be paid is \$156, of which he is asked to pay half, *viz.* : \$78 plus \$20 for clothing, total \$98, which is nearly three times as much as formerly. The immigration authorities say that they cannot help the enhanced cost of the steamer passages and clothing, and are simply carrying out the terms of the agreements ; but to many Indian immigrants in British

Guiana this constitutes an intolerable grievance. They say that they always understood that after 10 years they could secure repatriation at a cost of \$361, and now they are asked for \$98. The case is a difficult one. Legally I should imagine that the contention of the Immigration Authorities is correct, but it is quite likely that some of the immigrants did originally ask how much their share of the cost of these return passages would be, and were told \$361, which was the correct figure at the time that they left India. Their resentment is natural, and I think that the case is one where the Colonial administration should do their best to be as generous as possible.

74. Another question which was raised in this connection was the exact rights of paupers to be repatriated free of cost. In the terms of the agreement the following words occur, viz.:—"Such emigrants as are destitute or disabled shall, with children, dependents or wives, be entitled to a free return passage." The authorities interpret this to apply only to "those who are unable to pay their share of the cost of the return passage, and are pronounced permanently incapable of labour." As to the exact legal meaning of the term "destitute" I am unable to express an opinion. I do not think that an able-bodied man could ordinarily claim a free return passage on that ground, even if he were possessed of no visible property; but it seems to me that it is straining the interpretation too far to say that, unless a man is pronounced to be permanently incapable of labour, no degree of poverty will entitle him to a free return passage. I think that there must be a considerable class of men, more or less broken in health and morale, and possessed of no appreciable amount of property, who may be taken to qualify for a free return passage even though they cannot be pronounced to be permanently incapable of labour. The interpretation of the agreements in this respect appears to me to need careful consideration, and, if desirable, a representation to the Colonial Government.

75. There is one other point which demands mention here, and that is the position of the immigrants who return to India. When these men return to India they find prices much higher than they were 10 or 20 years ago, they often cannot endure the standard of living or the climate of India, they find work difficult to obtain, and they run up against many social difficulties. The result is that soon after their arrival in India a large number of these returned immigrants clamour to be sent back again to British Guiana, and, under existing regulations, are often not able to procure this. I have discussed the matter with some who have been through this ordeal, and others who have experience of it, and it seems to me that the problem is full of difficulties. The only thing that I can say in this respect is that it is quite clear to me that it would be mistaken kindness to repatriate to India many of the class of immigrants to British Guiana who are now asking for repatriation.

76. *Hospital Fees.*—In the hospitals of any suagar estate no fees are charged to people working on the estate; but in the 6 Government Hospitals and 8 Government dispensaries the system of charging fees is that all are asked to pay fees for attendance unless they produce a certificate of poverty from the poor-relief authorities. Many Indians find this a hardship, and claim that medical assistance should be given to them free of cost. The matter is not,

perhaps, one on which any expression of opinion is called for by me; but the matter was brought to my notice so many times, that I mention it. Outside Georgetown the total of fees received by hospitals and dispensaries amounts to only about \$14,000 a year, and the Colonial Government might perhaps find it possible to grant medical relief in hospitals free of charge to all who are not known to be in a position to pay for it. This would obviate delay in giving medical relief, and would provide for the intermediate class of persons concerned, without involving the loss of much revenue.

77. *Drinking Water Supply.*—Many complaints were received regarding the supply and the quality of the drinking water. In the case of some villages and new settlements remote from a river or creek, and equipped with no drinking-water canal, the position is undoubtedly bad, particularly during the dry season. What the people asked for in such cases was the construction of a drinking-water canal from the nearest river. The problem in each case is one of finance. On the various sugar estates water supply is in some cases derived from artesian wells or from some large system of water conservancy, and is good; but in most cases it is led by an open canal from some river. It is in cases where the water supply of a sugar estate was derived from the last source that complaints were received. The system is not an ideal one, and the difficulties of preventing the pollution of such a source are well-known in India. Still it is on this system that the Colony as a whole depends for its supply of drinking water, and the villages which have no such canal would be only too glad to have one. In course of time the construction of new artesian wells is likely to work great improvement to the water-supply, but in the meantime all that I can suggest is that efforts be made to construct drinking-water canals where they are most needed, and that all possible care be taken to protect such canals from pollution. The Sanitary authorities have such canals under their supervision, and their activities ought to achieve what is possible in this respect.

78. *Housing Accommodation on the Sugar Estates.*—The majority of the labourers working on the sugar estates are housed in the estate ranges, consisting of long lines of buildings divided into separate rooms. The ordinary type of these is shown in the second picture on page 2 of Appendix IX, but there are superior ranges such as those shown in the second and third pictures on page 4 (a) of Appendix IX. These ranges ordinarily consist of rooms 14 feet \times 10 feet, with a verandah in front and a small cook room and store room behind. To secure dryness some of them are built on ridges thrown up for the purpose, and others are raised off the ground on timber supports. Some of them are floored with planks throughout, others are half floored with planks. A single room, with cook room, etc., is allotted to three unmarried males or to a single family; but where a family is large, two rooms are sometimes allotted. Another type of housing for estate labourers has come into existence in recent years. This consists of separate two-roomed cottages with back premises, built of wood and raised off the ground; and one of these cottages is assigned to a family. Examples of such cottages are shown on pages 3 and 4 of Appendix IX. They provide good and comfortable accommodation, and are a great improvement on the ordinary type of range. Most estates have a few cottages of this kind, which were mostly put up a few years ago during the period of the

sugar boom, when funds were plentiful. The authorities of sugar estates say that they mean to build more such cottages when they can afford to do so, but that in the present depression they cannot afford to build such cottages costing \$200 or \$300, apiece. Besides the ranges and cottages erected by the Estate authorities for their labourers, there are usually a certain amount of houses built by the labourers themselves on land assigned to them for this purpose. These are usually built of wattle and mud, with timber supports, split palm staves and palm leaf or grass thatch. A good cottage of this description is shown on page 6 of Appendix IX, but there are many huts far less elaborate than this. In these locations the people are allowed to build as they like and to live pretty much as they like. These huts are often dilapidated and untidy, but it is quite possible that (as was sometimes stated) labourers often prefer to live under these conditions rather than in the more substantial ranges where they are subjected to sanitary regulations. To return to the ranges, the buildings appeared to me to be substantial and dry, and the compounds fairly sanitary and adequately supplied with latrine accommodation. These ranges are not very attractive places, and, of course, have not the charm which is secured by a separate cottage with a garden attached; but it is difficult to secure such advantages for a large body of labourers where expense has to be considered. The proximity of canals and water drains also (vide pictures on page 7 of Appendix IX) is somewhat repellant to anyone coming from a dry country, though it would, I imagine, cause no feeling of repulsion to anyone coming from Bengal. The question is whether the accommodation provided is adequate and reasonably comfortable. It has been provided in accordance with regulations and specifications laid down from time to time by Government, and the ranges are regularly inspected by the authorities. I received few complaints regarding the accommodation from labourers working on the estates; but on behalf of the labourers it has been represented that the accommodation is inadequate, and that a separate cottage of the improved type ought to be provided for each family, in the interests of decency and morality. The question, of course, depends on what standard one is going to take. If the standard which some sanitary authorities try to enforce in England of a minimum of four rooms to the cottage for each family is to be taken, the accommodation is of course inadequate; but I think that the accommodation provided in the average range is certainly superior to that which the ordinary Indian villager of the poorer class has in his own home, or to that which in India Government provides for its police sepoy, forest guards, etc. My personal opinion is that the accommodation is adequate under the circumstances, but that the sugar estates should be urged to continue the building of the separate cottages of the improved type, when finances permit them to do so, and that the continuance of such building should be watched and recorded.

79. *General complaint of ill-treatment.*—There now remains only one other matter to deal with in this Chapter. At the time of our visit everybody in the Colony was suffering severely from the depression in the sugar market. There had been a rapid fall in wages for a year or more, and real wages were probably at a lower level than before the war. Many immigrants were sore at the increased cost of return passages to India, some had personal grievances, some were sick and others were home-sick. For the broken men, the

human wreckage that I have already described, life was hard and unattractive. It was natural, therefore, that we should be assailed with many complaints. What added materially to the number and intensity of the grievances presented to us was that the arrival of the Indian Delegation had been awaited with eagerness by the Indian community. The most extravagant ideas of our mission were current amongst the working classes; that we had come with ships to take back to India all who wished to go: that we were come to redress all grievances and supply all deficiencies, and so forth. We were garlanded amidst shouts of "*Mahatma Ghandi Ke Jai*," and some of the suggestions made to us by leading men implied the belief that the Golden Age had returned, and that questions of expense need no longer be considered. Allowing for all this, however, I find it necessary to deal at some length with a general complaint of ill-treatment, because, if I believed that there was any substantial ground for such allegations, I should find it impossible to recommend the continuance of assisted immigration to British Guiana. Wherever we went we were met by a crowd of the least prosperous classes of Indians, collected together from the neighbourhood, who complained that they were beaten and ill-treated, made to work for long hours, underpaid and often turned out of their quarters. These complaints were mainly directed against the authorities of sugar estates, the overseers and the *sardars*; but in localities where sugar estates did not exist analogous complaints were freely made against Indian landlords and employers. Now with regard to the sugar estates it must be admitted that there are features in the situation such as leaders of organised labour in any western country would object to. The sugar estates are by far the largest employers of labour in the Colony, and most of the labourers depend on them not only for their wages, but for their houses, their rice and garden plots, their grazing facilities and their medical attendance. No labourer is now under any legal compulsion to continue to work on any sugar estate, if he wishes to leave it; but economic necessity may often compel him to do so. If he leaves the estate he does not know what employment, housing or means of living he may get elsewhere. When a man has saved \$100, he is economically a free man. Until he has done so he is not a free man. This no doubt is the case in other countries also. Most Indians do reach this state of competence; but many never do so. The principle "no work no pay" does not appeal to them, and they clamour to be sent back to India "where someone will look after them." It must not be thought, however, that in British Guiana capital is supreme and is in a position to treat labour as it likes. On the contrary, the most marked feature in the economic position of the Colony is the great deficiency of labour. It is essential to the success of any estate to keep the labourers contented, and there are a large number of Indians who work for the same estate from father to son, and rise to positions of responsibility and trust. They have identified their interests with those of the estate, and the estate looks after them well. There are others, however, who, for one reason or another, are not considered to be good workmen, and who would not be kept on the estate, if other labour were readily available. There is liable to be friction between the estate authorities and such. If a labourer living on the estate and enjoying the advantages of doing so does not turn out to work a reasonable number of days in the week, the estate authorities bring pressure to bear on him to do so. This constitutes a grievance

The alternative is to dismiss the man, which involves turning him out of his quarters to make room for another man. This constitutes a worse grievance. I cannot, however, regard the labourers, as a whole, as down-trodden by the estate authorities; indeed I have seen them adopt an attitude of truculence to the manager which I do not think any Indian *zamindar* or English farmer would tolerate from his labourers. As regards specific allegations of ill-treatment such cases were naturally difficult to verify. They are bound to occur anywhere in analogous conditions; but I believe that in the Colony they are rare, and that adequate facilities exist for any man who has a grievance to seek redress. Estate managers are available to receive complaints at specified hours. If redress cannot be obtained in this way, the aggrieved party can complain to the Immigration Agents, whose duty it is to investigate such complaints and to take action on them. Failing this, the labourer can seek redress in the ordinary courts, and has legal practitioners of his own community ready to take up his case. I have dealt with the matter at length because some leading men of the Indian community laid stress on the fact that in general labourers on the sugar estates received bad treatment. The statement had been made in India that in the Colonies Indian labourers were treated like cattle, and that nothing was done for their material or moral advancement. Mr. J. A. Luckhoo, whose opinions have already been quoted in paragraph 72, asserted in his formal evidence that this statement was applicable to British Guiana, though he afterwards modified his remarks to the effect that it did not apply to all estate managers. I think that such an allegation is a gross libel on some of the managers whose estates I visited, who take a great interest in the welfare of their labourers and have established most cordial relations with them. All managers do not reach this standard, and amongst the many managers appointed to estates there must be some who are apt to be harsh; but I do not believe that anything like brutality or systematic ill-treatment could go on without an enquiry being made and redress obtained. In this connection, I would quote the formal evidence given by Mr. J. W. Permaul, an Indian, well acquainted with the condition of Indians on the sugar estates. He was a keen partizan of Indian rights and aspirations but he gave his evidence carefully in a way which impressed me that he wished to be fair. His statement, as reported in the Press, is subjoined below:—

“Mr. J. W. Permaul, of Rose Hall, Corentyne, said that he had travelled to India about sixteen times during ten years as a compounder. He was acquainted with labourers on sugar estates. He thought that the wages paid to them were inadequate. The treatment mentioned as meted out to labourers was somewhat exaggerated. He would not say that the treatment was bad, but there was a certain amount of hardship connected with it. A labourer was compelled to work in some instances when he was not fit to do so. If the estate was in operation and he was needed he was compelled to work and unless he showed distinct signs of sickness no notice was taken of him. The country was not fit for habitation outside the estates; the lands were not irrigated and drained for a man to live comfortably on them. The drinking water supply wanted looking after and on

most estates it was had. He mentioned Plantation Albion where the water practically passed through the burial ground which was behind the hospital. Another point to which he desired to direct attention was the deduction of men's wages on complaints made by drivers for offences which might be personal. Housing accommodation was not proper and did not lead to the moral upliftment of the people. He did not agree that they should introduce immigrants at the present time. They had no room for additional labour for the existing industries but they would need them if there was going to be any development. With regard to the Civil Service he thought that a certain number of positions should be reserved for East Indians. They wanted a certain amount of controlling power so that when the country became prosperous no legislation would be introduced to oust them. He drew attention to the question of child labour. Under the law no children should be employed under 12 years of age, but that was not observed."

CHAPTER X.—SCHEME SUGGESTED AS THE BEST MEANS OF DEVELOPING THE COLONY THROUGH THE AGENCY OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS.

80. In Chapter I the physical features of the Colony have been described, and the difficulties in the way of development stated, which briefly consist of the cost of draining and laying off the land in the rich alluvial strip, the infertility of the sandy strip behind the alluvium, and the remoteness of the hinterland, in the absence of adequate communications. My tours in the coastal tract only served to impress upon me these difficulties, and it was not until I visited the North West District that I saw country which offered opportunities vastly superior to those of the other parts, which indeed presented facilities for small holders superior to anything that I have ever seen, though I have studied the question of small holdings for some years past in many parts of Europe, Asia, and America.

81. The North West District consists of the vast tract of undeveloped country to the west of the Colony, between the Pomeroon river and the Venezuelan boundary, a territory nearly 10,000 square miles in extent, occupied by a population of 11,000 persons, half of whom are aborigines (Caribs, Arawaks and Warraus). In this vast tract the total area under cultivation is only 3,000 to 4,000 acres, of which 885 acres are cultivated by the Indian community of some 400 persons who live almost entirely in Morawhana, the head-quarters of the District, and in the adjacent tracts on the banks of the Barima and Aruka rivers. The tract of country which I was able to inspect in some detail is the country south of Morawhana, surrounded by the Barima, Aruka, Koriabo, Itabo, Arawaw and Amakura rivers, as far as the Portage on the South (*vide* map, Appendix I). It includes some 120 square miles at present almost entirely under fine primary forest, and consists of ranges of hills running to a height about 500 feet in places, and dipping sharply in some spots, gently in others,

into the rivers, with a strip of swamp land between the foot of the hill and the river. A large area of these hills consists of red and yellow laterite soils derived from epidiorite and hornblende-schist. They contain fine loamy soils and good clays, some black soils which appear to be fertile, some gravels, and at places an outcrop of laterite rock. Towards the south are some soils consisting of black sands and cream-coloured textureless clays, presumably derived from granite-gneiss, which are very unattractive and would probably not be worth cultivating. Speaking generally, these hills contain a good proportion of very fine loams, upon which various kinds of citrus (Seville and tangerine oranges, limes, grape fruit, etc.), bread fruit, cocoa, coconuts, coffee, pineapples, bananas, vegetables and maize can now be seen growing luxuriantly and fruiting profusely. There are good plateaux, approximately flat, on which I have no doubt that good crops of millets, pulses, ground nuts, etc., could be grown by ordinary field methods. I also feel confident that onions and garlic of which the Colony now imports \$140,000 worth a year, largely from Holland, could be grown successfully here, and probably also potatoes. These hills offer good facilities for butter making and an unusually good opportunity for pig-keeping. They provide a charming place to live in, are healthy and have a good supply of excellent drinking water. The climate and general appearance reminds me strongly of Mahableshwar in the month of May, with this difference that the trees are 150 feet high instead of being 15 feet. I wish, however, to make it clear that it is in the clay and "pegass" soils at the foot of these hills that the great wealth lies. These hills were, presumably, originally islands in the sea, and the clay soils at their foot is Orinoco mud, similar to that of the alluvial belt which stretches along the coast of British Guiana, already referred to. The "Pegass" soils consist of a deposit of vegetable matter, from a few inches to several feet deep, brought down by the local rivers and superimposed on the alluvial clay. In the clay lands rice and possibly jute could be produced to very good advantage, while the "pegass" soils produce maize, coffee and many kinds of ground provisions (tannias, sweet potatoes, yams, eddoes, cassava, plantains, bananas, pineapples and black-eyed peas) in great profusion and with a minimum of effort. They are cultivated, year after year, with a mixture of these crops without the use of any manure, and with no tillage of any kind or the use of any implement except a cutlass to cut back the weeds. It is the combination of these dry hills, healthy for man and beast, having soils good for ordinary field crops and many kinds of fruit and vegetables, having good natural drainage and supply of drinking water, with the very rich soils at the foot of the hills and an excellent system of natural waterways, through and round the area, with sufficient draft for large ships and connected with the only river in the Colony which presents no difficulty to the entry of an ocean-going steamer, which makes the proposition attractive to a degree which, in my experience, is unique.

§2. To revert to the "pegass" soils on the creeks at the foot of the hills these lands are at present covered with dense forest, but the clearing of the forest presents no difficulty to the ordinary settler, and drainage is easier to effect than in other parts of the Colony. The aboriginals of this tract are experts at the work and are ready to undertake it. The cost of preparing 10

acres of such land for cultivation, using nothing but hired labour, is estimated as follows:—

Cost of cutting and draining 10 acres of pegees land on the creek.

Cutting	\$60
Clearing trench path	\$78
Digging trench, stumping and making dams	\$107
Digging Koker trench	\$8
One rung-wood Koker 15 feet long	\$20
Burning	\$2
Total	\$265

giving an average of \$26½ per acre.

In practice, however, much of this work would be done by the settler by degrees.

83. When the land has been cleared the ordinary practice is to take three crops of maize in the first two years; and afterwards to plant mixed crops of ground provisions. I attach some estimates of the cost of producing and the value of such crops, as supplied to me by the Agricultural Department. Such estimates are apt to be optimistic, but from what I saw of the produce of such lands I am satisfied that the crops are exceptionally luxuriant.

Cost of growing 10 acres of maize.

Selected cob corn for sowing 10 acres	\$7
Planting	\$9
Harvesting and transporting to store	\$16
Husking 100 bags	\$4
Hire of corn sheller	\$2
Shelling and bagging 100 bags	\$20
Cost of 100 bags	\$20
	<hr/>
	\$82
Transport of 100 bags from farm to steamer	\$7
Freight from Morawhiana to Georgetown and market fees in Georgetown	\$26
Agency	\$32
Total	\$147

Value of 100 bags of maize, at \$1 per bag, (1 bag—200 lbs.) = \$100.

The farmer would therefore get \$253, per crop.

84. The ground provisions are planted as a mixture, so all that I can do is to give the estimate of produce for each of the principal ingredients in the mixture, on the assumption that it is grown pure.

Estimate for crops planned pure

Name of crop.	Out turn per 10 acres.	Rate per unit.*	Total Value.	Period of growth.
Tannia (<i>Xanthosoma peregrina</i>) ..	4500 bags ..	\$3	\$13,500	9 months.
Sweet potatoes (<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>) ..	4200 bags ..	\$2.40	\$10,000	5 months.
†Yams (<i>Dioscorea alata</i>) ..	3500 barrels	\$3	\$10,500	9 months.
Eddoes (<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>) ..	3000 bags ..	1	\$3,600	5 months.
†Cassava (<i>Manihot utilisima</i>) ..	1500 barrels	\$1.40	\$2,000	6 months.

*Georgetown prices.

†Several varieties.

The cost of marketing, agency, etc., for a bag of tannia is estimated at 81 cents.

Building material abounds, including 10 varieties of trees which provide good timber, and 6 varieties of palms which provide staves, flooring, roofing, etc. The settlers have built themselves remarkably comfortable houses.

From what has been said it will be imagined that all that a settler has to do is to go to this tract, take up land and be happy. For a resolute man of resource this is largely true. I met many Indian settlers there, including *chamars* and *bhangis*, who had excellent farms and were living in comfortable houses, with large families, well fed and well clothed; and they were evidently proud of their achievement, as well they might be. Most of them have farms of 10 or 20 acres, some as much as 100 acres, and one Indian whom I visited had 45 acres under good cultivation. There are two great difficulties, however. The first is want of labour. These landholders all clamoured for more labour to be brought, and some men said that they were ready to take on 10 or 15 men. There certainly is a great lack of labour. Not only are many thousands of acres of this wonderful land lying waste for want of men to use it, but, on the land that is cultivated, crops can be seen rotting for want of sufficient men to harvest them. Coffee also has been largely planted and bears profusely, but probably not more than one-tenth of the crop is gathered. The rest rots in the ground for want of labour.

85. What these landholders do, in their efforts to get labour, is to go to Georgetown and bring back with them some of the odd-job Indians who hang about the Georgetown streets. They give them \$5 or 6 a month, a ration of rice, fish and oil, and as much ground provisions as they can eat. But these men are mostly broken in physique or morale, and almost all of them smoke ganja to excess. The landholders can get no work out of them, and the labourers complain bitterly of the treatment which they receive from

their employers. A largely signed petition from the landholders of the North West District was presented to me, praying that this import of ganja might be prohibited. I passed this on to the Colonial Secretary.

86. The other difficulty is that this tract is very remote from the markets. The difficulty and cost of sending produce to Georgetown is great, and the price of all articles brought from outside is unduly high. The Indians settled in this tract expressed the difficulty by saying "the land is good, the climate is good, the water is good; but there is no *bundolust*." This sums up the matter.

87. Here then is this remarkable land waiting for occupation by good cultivators; and when I remember the number of cultivators in India, in the congested parts of the Satara and Ratnagiri Districts, right good fellows engaged in the heart-breaking task of trying to support a family on two or three acres of indifferent land, I cannot but contrast their present condition with the opportunity which awaits them in this tract to lead their traditional life as peasant proprietors and to win through to comfort and affluence. At present, however, conditions are not such as to make it possible to bring cultivators from India and to leave them to settle down as peasant farmers by their own unaided efforts, since the land is covered by primary forest from the tops of the hills right down into the water. Even if a limited amount of assistance were given by Government to such settlers the only result that could be expected would be a slow and disorderly development, unsatisfactory to the Colony, and attended with much pain and grief to the settlers. Before a satisfactory settlement scheme can be launched, capital must be made available and a suitable organisation called into existence to start the clearing of the selected lands and its division into suitable holdings, to provide the sawn timber necessary for house construction, to provide wharves and roads, to arrange for water supply, sanitation, educational and medical facilities, to advance the money needed by settlers for maintenance and preliminary operations, to fence off grazing areas, to provide live stock, to arrange for the provision of the necessary supplies and the profitable marketing of the produce, to advise and guide the new settlers to the best advantage.

If the Colonial Government is in a position to finance any scheme of this kind, it might well do so; but I understand that they would find it difficult to provide the requisite funds. It was for this reason that I ventured to put up a scheme to the Colonial Government for the development of some 300 square miles of selected country by a company to be formed for the purpose of settling 5,000 families on 50,000 acres, the Company to take the steps necessary for the successful development of the scheme, and to be recompensed for its expenditure by a concession of land in the selected area. I believe that such a scheme could be successfully launched and worked at a profit, not only on account of the remarkable physical advantages which the territory offers, not only on account of the Indian settlers that it might hope to attract from India, but because there is a considerable demand for suitable peasant holdings both in British Guiana and in neighbouring West Indian islands, a demand which has largely remained unsatisfied owing to the fact that the development of these areas has always proceeded on a plantation basis. The essence of this scheme is that the development should take place on the basis of peasant farmers. In this way the Colony would receive the nucleus of the population that it so

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badly needs, a population which would spread up the existing water ways and would connect up the coastal lands with the interior. An outlet for surplus population would be provided for congested countries, and excellent facilities would be afforded to the settlers themselves. I believe that the existence of such a company would be the best guarantee for the adequate development of natural resources and a steady prosecution of the policy laid down; for if conditions were not made sufficiently attractive to settlers the company would lose the money that it had invested; whereas if it carried out its policy of development adequately it would soon create land values from which it could recoup itself, under the terms of its agreement. Apart from the introduction of fresh settlers from India, the scheme referred to above would incidentally provide the land suitable for the reward grants contemplated in the immigration scheme submitted to us by His Excellency the Governor, would satisfy the demand for small holdings which now exists amongst Indians and other communities in British Guiana, and would attract settlers from Barbadoes, Trinidad and other neighbouring islands and countries where there is a demand for land suitable for settlers of small means. I am unable to go into further detail here; but I may mention that I have collected much information about this tract which is available, if required.

CHAPTER XI.—SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

88. I consider that the climate and natural characteristics of British Guiana are such as to offer splendid opportunities for Indian immigration, and that there are likely to be great possibilities in the future for Indian settlers to obtain fertile land and become substantial peasant farmers.

89. At present, however, though unoccupied land is available to an almost unlimited extent, the physical and economic conditions which govern the agricultural situation are such that it is hardly possible for ordinary Indian immigrants to take up land and cultivate it with success immediately on arrival in the Colony.

90. I believe that it would be quite possible to make available large areas of land for the purpose of settlement by Indian agriculturists, and to call into existence the organisation necessary in order to secure this result and to give the settlers the assistance which they would need to tide them over their initial difficulties. The inauguration of such a scheme would be very beneficial both to India and to British Guiana.

91. Though I recognise that any scheme which contemplates that immigrants will have to work as labourers on arrival is less attractive than a scheme to settle them directly on the land, I would recommend that a regulated immigration of free labourers in families be permitted from India to British Guiana on terms of the nature outlined in the scheme presented to us by His Excellency the Governor of British Guiana, for the purpose of engaging in paid labour in the first instance and of receiving reward grants of land after three years' service. The matter is one for negotiation.

92. The number of labourers emigrating from India to British Guiana in any period needs to be carefully regulated, with reference to the demand for labour and the level of real wages which exist in British Guiana at the time or are anticipated in the near future. To effect the necessary adjustment and control I would recommend that the Immigration Department of British Guiana be strengthened so that it can undertake the duties of a labour bureau more effectively, collect and publish the requisite statistical information, act as a labour exchange, and undertake arbitration in labour disputes.

93. I would recommend that an officer of the 'Government' of India be stationed in British Guiana, whose duty it should be to watch over the interests of Indian immigrants and to keep the Government of India informed of the pertinent facts concerning their condition and status.

94. As regards political status, Indians are on an equality with other races in the Colony, and the Colonial Government is prepared to pass an Ordinance binding their successors, so far as that may be possible, not to make any change in the Constitution of the Colony which will operate in such a way as to place the Indian community in a worse position than the rest of the population. I would not, however, recommend that any communal privileges be granted to Indians in the Colony, or any regulations passed calculated to preserve them as a people apart from the rest of the inhabitants, since that would be likely to defeat the natural aspirations of the Indian community. Under the existing arrangements there is nothing to prevent the Indian community from controlling the political activities of the Colony if they wish to do so.

95. The reason why I am in favour of the reopening of Indian immigration to British Guiana under conditions of the nature specified, is that I am convinced that the normal conditions of the Colony offer to Indians, of many classes and occupations, opportunities for a far higher standard of living than India is able to offer them, and opportunities to win through to competence and wealth such as they have not got in their own home. In this process a fairly large number of men have been broken in the past; but the terms of the offer made by His Excellency the Governor with regard to reward grants of land for such as wish to settle in the Colony and for easier terms of repatriation for such as wish to return to India, will do much to obviate this. As an additional safeguard I would recommend that the Colony should maintain a subsidized farm colony for unsuccessful men who have not gone under sufficiently to qualify for the Poor-House.

96. If Indian immigration is stopped altogether the effect on the labour supply of the Colony will be very serious for a time, and it is probable that many sugar estates will have to close down, which will react very unfavourably on all in the Colony and on the Indian community more than any. In course of time the Colony would no doubt find other sources of labour, but the connection with India would gradually cease and the existing Indian community would in time become merged in the general population. If Indian immigration is again permitted, and adequate development can be secured of such a nature

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as to attract the right class of settlers, Indians will in a short time predominate in the Colony, and a prosperous Indian Colony will be created, offering various careers to Indians and profitable trade to India. Indeed it is not possible to foresee how far such development might not be pushed; for it is not only British Guiana, but in the surrounding countries, to a far greater extent, that vast areas lie waste and clamour for a population to take possession of the lands and to subdue them to agriculture by methods which none can display with greater effect than the skilful and industrious Indian cultivator.

9-10-22.

G. KEATINGE.

PPENDIX I.

APPENDIX II.

LAND AND LAND TENURES.

A. *Land*.—The total area of the colony is over 90,000 square miles = 57 million acres), of which the area cultivated is less than 200,000 acres; but, apart from land actually cultivated there are considerable areas held on various tenures for grazing, wood cutting, mining or speculative purposes. There are other lands on which existing landholders have an option. The total area of land over which private rights of every kind exist does not appear to have been calculated, and is constantly changing; but the general statement that 99 per cent. of the total area of the Colony is totally undeveloped and only one per cent developed, may be taken as representing approximately the percentage of the total area with regard to which private rights of a permanent nature exist, and with regard to which no such rights exist. Of the unoccupied lands, the great bulk is covered by dense forest, and it is only in the far hinterland that there are any extensive areas of open grass lands.

B. *Tenures*.—The unoccupied land, comprising 99 per cent. of the whole area, is known as Crown Land, with the exception of quite small areas which have come into the hands of the Government of the Colony by purchase, by acquisition, or by levy in satisfaction of a debt. These latter are known as Colony Lands. Until 1914 extensive grants of land were made on a large scale to individuals and to companies, conveying proprietary rights in the soil similar to freehold rights; and the bulk of the occupied land on the coastal strip is now held on such tenure, including an area of 167,000 acres held by the Sugar Companies, many village lands along the coast, inhabited by East Indians and Africans, and some rice lands along the coast and up the creeks mainly held by East Indians. The land held on these terms is the subject of many sales and leases, and changes hands freely. The present policy is not to make such grants of lands, but to give out land on lease only; but an exception has been made with regard to grants of land not exceeding 10 acres, made to small cultivators. This provision was made because it was represented that the East Indian farmer preferred to own his land rather than to lease it.

The regulations at present in force under which property in Crown Lands may be acquired are the *Crown Lands Regulations of 1919*. The most important provisions of these regulations may be briefly summarised as follows:—

- (1) Application must be made in writing to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines for a grant, lease, license or permission relating to Crown Lands.

Fees—

Filing fee..... \$5

Survey fee for land up to 10 acres..... \$7.50 (For larger areas the survey fee is proportionally less.)

Grants to small holders—

- (2) The area disposed of to one person at one time shall not ordinarily exceed 10 acres.

- (3) The price of land is now \$2.40 per acre, one-fifth of the purchase money to be paid at once, and the residue payable in four annual instalments.
- (4) The grant is made subject to the condition of cultivation or beneficial occupation of one-fifth of the grant within two years and $\frac{1}{2}$ of the grant within five years.
- (5) At the end of five years the grant is made absolute, provided that the purchase money has been paid, and the conditions of beneficial occupation complied with.
- (6) For five years from the date of the grant the grantee has preferent claim to purchase the second depth of the grant.
- (7) Grants may be transferred, leased, or mortgaged as soon as they become absolute.

Leases to small holders—

- (8) The area of land leased to any one person at any one time shall not ordinarily exceed 10 acres.
- (9) The length of the lease may extend, at the option of the lessee, to 99 years: and the lessee is entitled to one renewal for a similar period, subject to a revision of the rental, which shall be based on the value of the land, apart from any improvements effected by the lessee.
- (10) The present rent is 20 cents, per acre, per annum.
- (11) Land taken on lease must be cultivated or beneficially occupied as follows :—
 $\frac{1}{2}$ th of the area within two years.
 $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the area within three years.
- (12) Cultivation to be maintained in good order and in husband-like manner at all times during the lease, to the reasonable satisfaction of the Commissioner.
- (13) Leases may be transferred or mortgaged; but in the case of a lease of land not exceeding 10 acres, mortgage can be effected only with the sanction of the Commissioner; and, if the holder so desire, the mortgage may be effected in the presence of the Commissioner, a Magistrate, Commissary or Police Inspector.

N. B.—In the case of both grants and leases to small holders, made under these regulations the rights to minerals, metals, precious stones, coal and oil are reserved to Government.

- (14) Grazing leases are granted for a period up to 99 years, up to the limit of 5,000 acres, at a rent of 10 cents per acre, per annum, subject to the condition that a minimum head of stock of 2 heads of cattle to 5 acres is kept and that the land is fenced within five years.
- (15) If land given out on grazing lease is required for cultivation or for other purposes, Government may resume it after paying for actual improvements.

Other concessions—

- (16) Special terms are offered for large scale cultivation, timber, cutting, mining, etc.

APPENDIX III.

AGRICULTURE.

The following table shows the progress of agricultural development during recent years—

Year.	Total area cultivated.	Sugarcane	Rice.	Other Products.
		Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
1903	118,000	78,000	17,000	21,000
1908	147,000	74,000	39,000	33,000
1913	152,000	72,000	35,000	43,000
1918	197,000	73,000	60,000	63,000
1919	190,000	70,000	61,000	58,000

indicating a slight but steady decrease in the area under sugarcane, and a marked increase in the area under rice and other crops. The total area cultivated shows a steady increase amounting to 61 per cent. in 16 years. Apart from rice cultivation, the crops showing the most progress are cocoanuts which advanced from 4,000 to 27,000 acres, and coffee which advanced from 1,000 to 5,000 acres during the same period. The area under cocoa and ground provisions is about stationary.

Area under various crops in 1919.

	Acres.
Sugarcane	70,000
Rice (including 13,000 acres cropped twice)	74,000
Cocoanuts	27,000
Para rubber	4,000
Cocoa	2,000
Limes	1,000
	<hr/> 178,000 <hr/>

		<i>Acres.</i>
	Brought forward	.. 178,000
Ground provisions	.. ..	.. 18,000
	TOTAL	.. 196,000

Of the above totals the sugar estates were responsible for the following:—

	<i>Acres.</i>
Sugarcane	70,000
Rice	9,000
Cocoanuts	2,000
Ground provisions	2,000
Rubber, limes, coffee and cocoa	1,000
TOTAL	.. 88,000

The live stock were returned in 1919 as follows:—

Cattle	105,000
Other live stock:	58,000

Sugar.

In 1919, 86,971 tons of sugar were produced from 70,876 acres of cane, giving an average of 1.22 tons of sugar per acre of cane. This is a very low average, comparable with that of India taken as a whole but far below that of countries such as Java and Hawaii. It is partly due to poor extraction, and partly to poor cane outturns on some of the estates. This latter result, however, is largely due to the fact that on most estates physical conditions are such that all the tillage has to be done by hand, and the labour supply is not adequate for the purpose. This results in more ratoon crops being taken than would be the case if labour were more plentiful and cheaper. The best estates, however, get 2½ tons of sugar to the acre, and in individual fields the crop is sometimes very good. So far as the soil is concerned the richness of the alluvial belt is all that can be desired for sugarcane. The great difficulty is to provide adequate drainage for this crop. The sugar estates have been admirably laid off. The land is naturally level, and they are protected on all sides by high earthen embankments, in the front substantial sea-defences, at the back a solid dam for protection from flood water in times of heavy rain, and side dams of a less substantial nature for the same purpose. Wherever the lie of the land permits drainage by gravity flow, arrangements for this are made, and the drains discharge into the sea or creeks at low tide through a "koker," or sluice gate, which opens and shuts automatically with the tide. Where conditions do not submit of this system large pumping plants have been erected, and some estates have the admirable system of a large engine erected on the back dam which can work a pump on either side, so that in time of heavy rain one pump can lift water at the rate of 200 tons a minute, over

the dam and discharge it into a creek, while in times of drought the other pump can introduce water at a similar rate from the creek into the estate canals. The estates themselves are divided up into suitable blocks, each equipped with its own drains and roads, and the whole is intersected by canals which serve as navigation canals and carry the cane to the mill, which act as irrigation canals when filled up with outside water during periods of drought, and which can even be used for drainage if pumped dry, though, of course they do not suffice for all the drainage required. Drainage is indeed the great difficulty, and is provided for by drainage cuts in the fields at frequent intervals. In most cases the drainage arrangements are fairly adequate; but the necessity for these frequent drainage cuts makes mechanical cultivation almost impossible. All tillage operations have to be done by hand, and this is very costly. They cannot employ steam cultivation, as is done in such countries as Hawaii and Formosa, and they have not got cheap labour in the sense that countries like India and Java enjoy this advantage. The problem that they are up against is the necessity for a large labour supply, coupled with a much higher rate of wages than is paid in other countries which use labour freely. Another difficulty which the high cost of tillage by hand presents is that it prevents any system of green-manuring. On an intractable clay soil the mechanical effect of green-manuring can hardly fail to be beneficial for sugar-cane; and the Agricultural Department has demonstrated the value of incorporating rice straw in the soil. It would seem to be almost certain that a heavy green-manuring with *crotalaria juncea* would produce a striking result; but the shortage and high cost of labour prevents the trial of such experiments.

The criterion of success in cane growing is the cost of producing a ton of cane, of fair average quality. If we take the year 1913 as a year which gives normal figures, comparable as between one sugar producing country and another, the cost works out roughly as follows:—

Cost of a ton of stripped cane delivered at the factory in 1913

Hawaii	£1 : 1 : 4
Formosa	£0 : 13 : 4
Java	£0 : 9 : 4
India (Deccan)	£0 : 13 : 4
Cuba	£0 : 10 : 1
British Guiana	£0 : 14 : 9

(The figures for the first four countries were collected by myself on the spot in 1913. The figure for Cuba is taken from Geerlig's "The World's Cane Sugar Industry," p. 179. The figure for British Guiana was supplied to me by the Secretary, Sugar Planter's Association, British Guiana).

In the matter of sugar making machinery, some of the Sugar Estates are well equipped with modern machinery, and improvement in this respect has been made in recent years but on some estates the machinery is antiquated; and it was estimated only a few years ago that the outturn of sugar in the Colony might be increased by 15 per cent. merely by the improvement of crushing plant in the factories.

It has been estimated that the alluvial area in the Colony is capable of producing $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons of sugar, and that, in addition, a large amount of sugar might be produced in other tracts where sugar has not yet been tried. However this may be, there seems to be little prospect of any marked extension in the near future; indeed the area under cane is slowly receding. During the last century the production of sugar was more than doubled, and the figure now varies between 100,000 and 120,000 tons a year. In the present state of the sugar market it is quite likely that some of the weaker estates will go out of sugar cultivation, and the production of sugar in the Colony may even fall to half the present figure; but the stronger estates appear to be on a sound footing, and the physical conditions are too good to permit the industry to go under permanently. It seems probable that on some estates blocks of land could be found on which mechanical cultivation could be introduced without interfering unduly with drainage. If this is so the cost of production might be reduced in those areas.

Before leaving the subject of sugar I may mention one fact of agricultural interest. It is found by experience that the fertility of worn-out sugar lands can be renovated by putting this land under water and keeping it under water for a period of from one to three years. This is remarkable; and what is stranger still is that the benefit desired appears to come from an improvement in the texture of the soil, brought about by the continued flooding.

Rice.—As might be expected the rich soil of the alluvial tract, coupled with the possibility of regulating the water supply, makes the country very suitable for rice. Between 1903 and 1919 the area under rice cultivation has extended from 17,000 to 61,000 acres; and whereas prior to 1893 the average annual import of rice into the Colony was 18,000 tons, this import had by 1917 been converted into an export of 14,000 tons. During the past 20 years the outturn of paddy per acre, estimated for the whole colony has varied between 2,100 and 2,900 lbs. per acre, or an equivalent of between 1,300 and 1,750 lbs. of clean rice per acre, if we take rice at 3-5ths of its equivalent in paddy. This compares well with the estimated general averages for Bengal and Burma which are placed at 1,200 and 1,500 lbs. of clean rice, respectively, to the acre. As a matter of fact, however, the facilities for rice growing in British Guiana are far better than these comparative figures would appear to show, because (1) a large part of the rice in British Guiana is grown on lands on which the water is not under control, and (2) the area sown to rice is for greater than the rice growers can manage; which involves long delays in sowing and reaping, poor tillage, and broad-casting instead of transplanting. Probably about half the rice in the Colony is broadcasted. For the above reasons the general average outturn is much lower than the facilities warrant. Where the water is under control 3,500 lbs. of paddy per acre (= 2,100 lbs. of clean rice) are commonly obtained, and by careful methods the Agricultural Department get yields up to 5,600 lbs. of paddy per acre (= 3,360 lbs. clean rice). Looking at the alluvial tract as a whole I think that there can be no doubt that it has very fine possibilities for rice growing. The facilities for getting the water under control are far greater than in most rice growing countries, and the cost is relatively small. I think that there is a great future for British Guiana as a rice growing and rice exporting country.

Cocoanuts.—Cocoanuts have been extensively planted in recent years, largely on unsuitable land. No doubt there are tracts in the Colony suitable for cocoanuts, but most of the present plantations are suffering from defective drainage, as their unthrifty appearance indicates.

Rubber and Limes.—Suffer from diseases, and their successful cultivation presents difficulties.

Cocoa.—Appears to do well, but has only been planted on a small scale.

Coffee.—Appears to do remarkably well in some tracts; but for want of labour to pick it a large part of the crop rots in the ground.

Ground Provisions.—The miscellaneous mixed crops of fruits, vegetables, etc., so designated, will grow freely on drained land anywhere in the alluvial area. In Chapter X an estimate of the produce of such cultivation on "pegass" soils has already been given. There is no doubt that this class of cultivation does better on the soils where there is an admixture of vegetable matter or sand, than it does on the pure clay; but wherever the alluvial soil has been drained it will grow wonderful crops of maize, tannias, eddoes, cassava, yams, sweet potatoes, black-eyed peas, plantains, bananas, etc. At Onderneeming, where I had an opportunity of studying this kind of cultivation, it reminded me strongly of the very fine cultivation on the garden lands of the Surat District round Amalsad, land which commands enormous prices. Land of the kind mentioned above is freely available in British Guiana at nominal prices, and has thus advantage over the land at Amalsad, that whereas at the latter place frequent irrigation and heavy manuring are necessary, in British Guiana crops can be taken all the year round without any irrigation and for years together without any manure. One difficulty in the way of growing such crops, however, is that they are easy to pilfer; and thefts of this kind are common.

Potential Crops.—It seems to me to be almost certain that on some of the varied, rich, alluvial soils, where abundant water is under command, jute could be cultivated with success; but I cannot claim any knowledge of jute cultivation.

Good cattle are bred in the Colony and might be greatly improved by more attention to systematic breeding and feeding; but the wetter parts of the coastal tract are not very suitable for cattle. I believe that buffaloes would do better here. There are a few imported buffaloes in the Colony, but they appear to be of an inferior draught breed. I think that it would be profitable to introduce some good Delhi buffaloes, which are a good milk breed, and would provide an industry in butter making. The butter used in the Colony is now imported, and commands a high price. The male stock would be useful to small holders for ploughing their rice fields, and could probably also be used in some places for ploughing sugar-cane fields, as is now done in Trinidad.

Pigs are profitable animals in the Colony, and in forest tracts there is usually an abundance of food for them in the fruit of various palm trees growing wild. It is a common thing to hear people say that the reason why they do not grow more ground provisions is that there is no market for them. This is a fact in many localities; but ground provisions might be fed with advantage

to pigs; and if a bacon-curing industry were started, it is likely that a profitable export trade might be built up.

Areca-nut (supari) trees grow freely and with little attention, but there is hardly any market for the produce in British Guiana. The possibility of export of areca nuts to India is worth considering.

The most obvious agricultural development, however, is the growing of millets and pulses as field crops on the hills mentioned in Chapter X and any other places found to be suitable. Many Indians told me that they would be glad to obtain jowari, bajra, nachani, etc., but were unable to do so. At present wheat, dhal, and split-peas form a large part of the staple food of the Colony. All are imported, and their cost is relatively high. I believe that there is no reason why home-grown millets, tur (arhar) and other pulses should not largely take their place, with the result that the cost of living would be lowered to the advantage of all other industries and of the population in general.

APPENDIX IV.

ANALYSIS OF POPULATION, INDUSTRIES, ETC.

Total Population of the Colony.

1911	..	..	..	..	..	296,041
1921	...	..	..	..	..	297,691

showing an increase of only 1,650 in 10 years. The smallness of the increase is accounted for by the influenza epidemic of 1918-19, which is estimated to have caused 12,000 deaths, and by the fact that indentured emigration from India ceased in 1917, while 3,357 indentured emigrants were repatriated to India during the years 1919 and 1920, under the terms of the indentured agreements.

Distribution of the Population.

In towns	..	..	..	..	..	67,000
On Sugar estates	..	..	..	..	..	66,000
In Villages	..	..	..	..	..	112,000
On farms and settlements	..	..	..	..	..	42,000
In forest districts	..	..	..	..	..	8,000

Racial Analysis.

Europeans	..	..	..	..	..	3,000
Portuguese	..	..	..	..	..	9,000
East Indians	..	..	..	..	..	124,000
Chinese	..	..	..	..	..	2,000
Blacks	..	..	..	..	..	117,000
Mixed races	..	..	..	..	..	30,000
Aborigines	..	..	..	..	..	9,000

East Indians.—The total number of East Indians returned at the 1921 census was 124,938, 1,529 less than 1911. Of the present East Indian population 68 per cent. were born in the Colony.

Classification of East Indians according to Religion.

Hindus	95,000
Mahommedans	18,000
Christian	11,000
Parsi	244

Classification of East Indians according to occupation.

Professional	350
Domestics	1,430
Commercial	2,270
Agricultural	78,018
Industrial	2,481
*Unoccupied	40,385

*(i.e., women engaged in domestic duties, children, etc).

Excess of Males over Females amongst East Indians.

1911 ..	20,000, i.e., giving 73 females to 100 males.
1921 ..	13,000, i.e., giving 80 females to 100 males.

Prior to 1911 the disproportion between males and females amongst the East Indians must have been much greater, since amongst the indentured labourers brought to British Guiana the ratio of males to females was more than 2 to 1, and the fact that the number of females is now approaching the number of males is due to the fact that 68 per cent. of the present East Indian population are colony-born, and amongst them the numbers of males and females are approximately equal.

Table showing changes in the East Indian population during the last six years, and the causes of the same.

Year.	Previous number.	Intro-duced.	Other arrivals.	Births.	Totals additions.	Repa-riated.	Other depar-tures.	Deaths.	Total losses.	Total at end of year.
1915	..	134,849	828	3,224	140,066	..	597	2,941	3,538	136,528
1916	..	136,528	1,384	3,630	142,762	..	1,013	3,805	4,818	137,944
1917	..	137,944	1,480	3,950	144,066	..	1,316	4,610	5,926	138,140
1918	..	138,140	1,630	3,213	142,983	..	1,407	6,792	8,198	134,785
1919	..	134,785	1,423	3,283	139,491	889	1,326	6,412	8,758	130,854
1920	..	130,854	1,782	4,430	137,066	2,468	1,485	3,421	7,374	129,692

APPENDIX V.

VITAL STATISTICS.

During the years 1911 to 1921 the total births recorded in the Colony amounted to 92,000 and the deaths also amounted to 92,000. Amongst the East Indians the births amounted to 40,000 and the deaths to 42,000 during the same period of 10 years, so that there was a net loss of 2,000 East Indians due to this cause.

Messrs. McNeill and Chimmanlal reported in 1914 that the vital statistics for the quinquennium prior to their visit averaged out as follows for the Indian population in British Guiana, viz:—

Average Indian birth rate per mille	26.7
Average Indian death rate per mille	34

the low birth rate being due to the fact that the number of women was far short of the number of men.

The figures of vital statistics for the East Indian population during the last six years available are as follows:—

Per mille.

	INDIANS ON SUGAR ESTATES ONLY.		WHOLE INDIAN POPULATION.	
	Births.	Deaths.	Births.	Deaths.
1915	30	24	32	25
1916	25	24	20	28
1917	26	29	29	33
1918	21	46	23	50
1919	23	48	24	48
1920	30	23	35	27
Average	25.8	32.3	28.1	35.8
Average omitting the two years of influenza, viz., 1918-19.	27.7	25	30.5	29.2

APPENDIX VI.

WAGES.

The heaviest work on the estates is punt-loading, i.e., loading punts with cut cane. For this work the strongest and steadiest workers are selected. On some estates this work is paid for by a daily wage, which in the early part of 1922 was 3/4 a day. On other estates this work is given out on task wages, and the earnings are about the same. It is a work which involves long hours.

As examples of the wages earned by ordinary labourers, male and female, the following figures for wages are given, which were being paid on one of the largest sugar estates in Berbice.

Table showing weekly and daily wages. Shovel Gang. (Male).

Week ending	6-1-22	13-1-22	20-1-22	27-1-22	3-2-22	10-2-22	17-2-22	24-2-22
No. at work ..	133	126	82	107	106	100	105	115
No. of working days lost	124	238	284	133	154	189	141	223
Per cent of working days lost.	15.5	31.4	57.7	21.7	24.2	31.5	22.3	32.6
Amount earned in dollars and cents	387.76	251.44	57.1	125.04	141.44	130	195	223.16
Average per day worked in cents	57.5	49.1	27.1	26.1	29.3	31.6	39.8	47.9
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Average per day worked in shillings and pence.	2 4½	2 0½	1 1½	1 1	1 2½	1 3½	1 8	2 0

(V.B.—Of the period shown above grading was in progress during the whole of the first week and during a few days of the second. Grading re-started on February 22nd, and this affected work for some days previously.)

Details regarding the wages of 4 men in the above gang are shown in the table below. Two of these men were selected as earning high wages, and two as earning low wages:—

Week ending.	Mohan	Sanchar.	Ramhagan	Ramlal.
6th January 1922	17 0 in 6 days	15 8 in 5 days	12 0 in 6 days	8 1 in 5 days
13th January 1922	6 1 in 3 days	8 1 in 4 days	3 0 in 1 day	5 2 in 1 day.
20th January 1922	1 6 in 2 days	Absent	4 6 in 3 days	Absent.
27th January 1922	7 2 in 1 day	Absent	6 6 in 6 days	4 8 in 4 days.
3rd February 1922	8 2 in 5 days	6 0 in 5 days	5 4 in 5 days	4 8 in 5 days.
10th February 1922	1 6 in 3 days	5 0 in 5 days	7 6 in 5 days	5 2 in 1 day.
17th February 1922	10 10 in 5 days	13 1 in 6 days	7 0 in 5 days	5 10 in 5 days.
24th February 1922	11 1 in 5 days	12 0 in 5 days	6 8 in 5 days	3 4 in 3 days.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Average per day worked —	2 1½	2 0	2 5½	1 2½

Turning now to women workers, the following are the figures for a female weeding gang on the same estate and for the same period:—

Week ending ..	6-1-22	13-1-22	20-1-22	27-1-22	3-2-22	10-2-22	17-2-22	24-2-22
No. at work ..	61	73	50	83	96	65	94	92
No. of working days lost.	78	61	176	129	144	173	111	82
Per cent. of working days lost.	21·3	13·0	68·0	25·9	25·0	33·0	19·0	14·8
Amount earned in dollars and cents	83·62	102·10	25·64	91·78	99·60	100·7	105·3	134·14
Average per day worked in cents,	29	30	20·6	24·8	23	30·1	23·2	28·5
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Average per day worked in shillings and pence,	1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 3	0 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 3	0 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$

Details of the wages of two workers in the above gang during the same period, one selected as earning high wages, and one selected as earning low wages.

Week ending.	Lakraja.	Someria.
6th January 1922	5 6 in 5 days.	6 0 in 5 days.
13th January 1922	6 0 in 6 days.	3 10 in 2 days.
20th January 1922	2 4 in 3 days.	1 6 in 2 days.
27th January 1922	8 4 in 6 days.	3 4 in 5 days.
3rd February 1922	Absent.	4 6 in 6 days.
10th February 1922	9 0 in 5 days.	0 8 in 1 day.
17th February 1922	5 4 in 6 days.	4 0 in 4 days.
24th February 1922	10 2 in 6 days.	4 2 in 4 days.
Average per day worked	1s. 3d.	0s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

II.

Standard and cost of living for one male labourer for one week in British Guiana on 15th March 1922 as estimated by Agent General for Immigration.

Article.	Standard for one week.	Price in cents.
Rice	1 gallon= 8 lbs. 4 oz.	28
Dhal	2 lb	16
Wheat flour	4 lb	28
English potatoes	2 lb	14
Onions	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb	7
Sugar	4 lb	16
Coffee	1 lb	14
Dried fish	$1\frac{1}{2}$ lb	18
Cocoanut oil	1 pint	22
Kerosine oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint	6
Salt	1 lb	3
Matches	3 boxes	3
Tobacco	2 oz	16
Total cost of food		\$1 91
Clothes estimate for one week		31
Implements estimate for one week		10
		\$2 32
		=9s. 8d

III.

Standard of living and cost on 15th March 1922 for one labourer as estimated by the Agent General for Immigration

Article.	Standard for one week.	Price in cents.
Rice	$1\frac{1}{2}$ gallons= 12 lb 6 oz.	36
Dhal	1 lb	12
Wheat flour	4 lb	24
English potatoes	4 lb	24
Onions .. .. .	..	4
Masala .. .. .	..	8
Sugar	2 lbs.	8
Tea .. .. .	..	4
Garlic .. .. .	..	4
Cocoanut oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint.	8
Kerosine oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint.	6
Salt .. .. .	..	2
Matches .. .. .	..	2
Tobacco	2 oz.	12
Milk .. .. .	..	14
Fuel .. .. .	..	24
Soap .. .. .	..	3
Total food, etc. .. .. .	..	\$1 90 [c o

Article.					Standard for one week.	Price in cents.
Brought forward	\$ 1.95
Clothes	31
Implements	10
Total	2 36 =9s. 10d.

IV.

Standard of living and cost on 15th March 1922 for Hindu male and wife for one week as estimated by Agent General for Immigration.

							\$.
Food, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	2.46
Clothes	..	..	..	..	..	..	51
Implements	...	..	..	..	..	..	20
Total							3.17 =13s. 2½d.

V.

Standard of living and cost on 15th March 1922 for Hindu male, wife and two children for one week as estimated by Agent General for Immigration.

							\$.
Food etc. 7	..	..	..	..	..	..	3.50
Clothes	..	..	..	..	..	..	95
Implements	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Total							4.65 =19s. 4½d.

VI.

Standard of living and cost in March 1922 for one Hindu male labourer as estimated by the labourer himself.

Article.					Standard for for one week.	Cost in March 1922.
Wheat flour	..	..	..	..	12 lb	72 cents.
Dhal	..	..	..	..	2 lb	22 "
Potatoes	..	..	..	..	4 lb	20 "
Salt	..	..	..	..	..	3 "
Masala	..	..	..	..	¼ lb	6 "
Garlic and onion	..	..	..	..	..	8 "
Cocoonut oil	..	..	..	..	1 pint.	5 "
Kerosine oil	..	..	..	..	..	6 "
Pepper	..	..	..	..	..	4 "

Article.	Standard for one week.	Cost in March 1922.
Tobacco	48 cents.
Matches	3 "
Sugar	2 lb	6 "
Milk	12 "
Tea	6 "
Green vegetable	4 "
Meat	48 "
Fish	12 "
Soap	4 "
Fuel	24 "
<i>Add for clothes and implements as in No. III.</i>		\$3.13
		41
		<hr/> \$3.54
		=14s. 9d.

VII.

Standard of living and cost in March 1922 for one Hindu male labourer as estimated by the labourer himself.

Article.	Standard for one week.	Cost in March 1922.
Rice	2 gallons = 16lb 8 oz.	40 cents.
Wheat flour	8 lb	56 "
Dhal	1 "mug"	22 "
Salt .. .. .	..	2 "
Cocanut oil .. .. .	..	20 "
Kerosine oil .. .. .	..	7 "
Masala .. .. .	..	2 "
Potatoes .. .. .	..	6 "
Sugar .. .. .	..	5 "
Tobacco and matches .. .. .	..	28 "
<i>Add for clothes and implements as in No. III</i>		\$1.88
		41
		<hr/> \$2.29
		=9s. 6½d.

Other estimates for the cost of living for a single man for a week in March 1922 as given by labourers were—

	No. VIII.	No. IX.	No. X.	No. XI.
Food, etc.	\$ 2·93 41	\$2·96 41	\$2·54 41	\$3·47 41
Add for clothing and implements	\$3·34 —13s. 11d.	\$3·37 14s. 0½d.	\$2·95 12s. 3½d.	\$3·88 16s. 2d.

Standard of living and cost in March 1922 for Hindu labourer and wife for one week, as estimated by the labourer himself.

	XII.	XIII.
Food, etc.	\$3·96 71	\$4·44 71
Add for clothing and implements as in No. IV	\$4·67 =19s. 5½d.	\$5·15 = 21s. 5d.

APPENDIX VIII.

SCHEME AND MEMORANDUM PRESENTED TO US BY HIS EXCEL- LENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA.

C.S.O.-6262-1920.

BRITISH GUIANA COLONIZATION SCHEME.

Information for intending colonists. As forwarded by Colonial Office to India Office

This memorandum is issued under the authority of the Commissioner of the Government of British Guiana, and sets out the terms that that Government undertakes to observe in respect of persons who are accepted as colonists and emigrate to British Guiana under that Colony's Colonization Scheme.

An adult man or woman accepted as a colonist will receive—

- (1) A free passage to British Guiana, for himself or herself, wife, children and such dependents as may be permitted to accompany them.

- (2) Employment with registered employers, if they desire such employment at the outset, at the current rates of wages which are such that :—

An ordinary able-bodied man can earn 4s. 2d., at piece-work in the field, in seven hours.

An ordinary able-bodied woman can earn 2s. 1d., at piece-work in the field, in seven hours.

No prospect of a fall in these rates can be foreseen.

- (3) Free housing for three years, if employed with a registered employer; for married persons separate married quarters or cottages. A number of separate cottages are now being built.
- (4) Free hospital and Medical treatment for three years, if employed with a registered employer.
- (5) Free rations for children under eleven years of age, for 12 months after arrival.

Free milk rations for children under five years, during the whole time their parents remain in the employment of a registered employer.

Free rations will be issued for a period of six months to pregnant and nursing women working with a registered employer.

- (6) A free return passage to India after seven years' residence in the Colony for adult colonists and their dependents. An assisted passage after five years' residence in the Colony, towards which each adult emigrant will contribute £7 10s. 0d. or one quarter of the cost whichever is less. An assisted passage after three years' residence, towards which an adult emigrant will contribute £15 or one-half of the cost, whichever is less.

In the case of colonists' children under 10 years of age, the above amounts are halved.

Any individual or family will be sent back free of charge at any time if the Government of India's supervising officer or the Chief Colonisation Officer so directs.

- (7) A special Reward Grant of Land, protected from, or not liable to floods, drained and suitable for cultivation, of five acres to the head of a colonist family, or of two acres to a single colonist (man or woman), where the claimant has engaged in any form of agriculture under a registered employer for three years continuously.

The title to such land will be conditional on the fulfilment of the requirements of the British Guiana Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation. The fees payable for the Reward Grants of Land will be five annual payments of 4s. 2d., an acre each, made in advance at the beginning of each year.

The cost of preparing these Reward Grants of Land, as stated above, will be borne by the Government of the Colony.

- (8) No colonist who has applied for, or received, a free or assisted return passage to India will receive a Reward Grant of Land. No colonist who has received a Reward Grant will receive a free or assisted passage unless he has fulfilled all the requirements of the Crown Lands Regulations in regard to the payment of fees and beneficial occupation.
- (9) Immigrants who are eligible for return passage may commute or defer such right in exchange for a free grant of land, subject to carrying out the conditions as to beneficial occupation.

Memorandum attached to His Excellency the Governor's scheme.

Hitherto the only terms proposed with regard to Indian immigrants have been those which it has been suggested should be given to immigrants whose passage to the Colony is paid by the Colony and who have no means by which they can start agricultural operations immediately on their own account. Up to the present moment, nearly every indentured immigrant has had to start work as the employé of some other person, and the immigrants who have made such remarkable progress in the acquisition of property began their career in the Colony in this manner.

2. Under the new system, the immigrant, if he works for anybody else, can choose, his own employer. If he is able to support himself for a little while, and has some small means of his own, he can almost at once become a small farmer on his own account.

3. The financial aspect of the introduction of immigrants, most of whom will during the first three years work under registered employers, is different from that of immigrants who immediately on arrival start work on their own account.

Registered employers will probably have to contribute a small sum for each day on which labour is done by a recently introduced immigrant. These small contributions will in time go some considerable way to paying the cost of return passages of those immigrants who desire to return.

4. It is within the power of the Government, without reference to the Legislature, to give grants of Crown land to any persons who are likely to make a good use of them, and it is part of the policy of the Government to make such grants to immigrants who are their own masters, so as to induce them to settle permanently in the Colony.

5. Similar grants would be made to immigrants on their first arrival, if they were in a position to occupy the land immediately; but it is possible that available Crown land within reach of the market may require some expenditure before an income can be derived from it. When the immigrant has a certain amount of money himself, the Government would be willing to help by advances repayable over a term of years, but it cannot make such advances without the previous consent of the Legislature. Such consent

would probably be freely given in times of prosperity, but would be withheld whenever there is any financial stress. In times of depression it would no doubt be advisable to suspend temporarily the grants to immigrants.

6. There may be immigrants who would arrive in the Colony at their own expense either by immigrant ship or by ordinary means of conveyance. To such immigrants the free grants of land that would be made would be more liberal than in the case of immigrants whose passage to the Colony was paid from the Government funds. Possibly, if it were known that a certain number of families were coming at their own expense, the Government could prepare for their reception plots of land with dwellings thereon, the Government bearing the cost of preparation of the land and erection of buildings to an amount equal to the ordinary cost of introduction of the immigrant. Any scheme of this kind would in each case have to be previously approved by the local Legislature.

7. It is impossible to say how many acres of land would be given, as the value of the land differs so much in different localities. Most of the sugar lands on the coast are even at this time of depression worth some £20 an acre, and have cost much more than that to put into their present condition with drainage and sea defence. On the other hand, there are lands which can be utilised at a comparatively low cost, and for each the only permanent requirement would be the actual cultivation of half of it within a term of years to be fixed. In all these cases it is necessary for an agreement to be come to, between the immigrant and the Government.

8. It is doubtful whether the Legislature would be willing to assume the obligation to give free passages back to India in the case of immigrants who did not serve for a minimum period under registered employers, but it would probably agree to repatriate any immigrants whom the representative of the Indian Government in the Colony might for special cause deem it desirable to repatriate.

9. The Government will not feel bound to make grants to any immigrants not previously approved by its own agent.



